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Lovers and Madmen:
The Μανία-Φρονεῖν Opposition in Plato's *Phaedrus*

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For Mark

Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.

Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act V, Scene 1, 4-6

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ABSTRACT

Lovers and Madmen: The Μανία-Φρονεῖν Opposition in Plato's Phaedrus

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KEYWORDS: Plato, Phaedrus, Socrates, Lysias, μανία, φρονεῖν, ἔρως, madness, lucidity, μαινόμενος, φρόνιμος, ἐραστής, ἐρώμενος, παιδεραστία, ἀλήθεια, λήθη, socially shared perspective, ὑπόθεσις, κινεῖν, palinode, aetiological myth, ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, ψυχή, ἀνάμνησις, hunger, superlative, φιλοσοφία, wings, ἄνω/κάτω, epideictic speech, ἐγκώμιον, ψόγος, σωφροσύνη, ὕβρις.

In this thesis we propose to examine the first half of the *Phaedrus* (sc. until the end of the palinode) in light of the opposition between the notions of μανία and φρονεῖν, as they are explicitly and implicitly presented in the erotic speeches. These are read in dialogue with what we have designated as the "implicit speech" or "speeches", i.e., the plurality of conceptions regarding ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν that were part of Ancient Greek culture. Our reading of the two speeches against ἔρως, Lysias' and Socrates' first speech, engages with this cultural background, and extracts a conception of μανία and φρονεῖν with which the palinode will primarily confront.

Our reading of the palinode divides it into two sections: the first, the presentation of the first three kinds of beneficial μανία; the second, the mythical narrative that deals with erotic μανία. We emphasise the existence of a wide gulf between these two moments in terms of their ontological, theological and anthropological conceptions. The second section of the palinode is revolutionary not only in contrast with the "implicit speech" and the speeches against ἔρως, but also in contrast with the very beginning of the palinode – which preserves many of the conceptions and assumptions found in the previous speeches and in the cultural tradition. It is in order to explain the foundation, meaning and significance of this gulf that we explore and discuss the notion of ὑπόθεσις and its role as an implicit operator in the *Phaedrus*.

From our reading of the second part of the palinode, it is clear how the introduction of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος brings about a radical revision of the perspectives on the nature of reality and on human nature and condition that were implicit in the previous speeches and in the first part of the palinode. We show that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος corresponds to the projection of a multiplicity of cognitive and desiderative requirements that our normal perspective demands, but cannot possibly satisfy. In other words, our perspective is shown to be living beyond its means, yearning for something that by far exceeds what it can get in its *de facto* condition: the superlative. This results in a major revision of the understanding of φρονεῖν and μανία – a revision that challenges the traditional understanding of these two notions as binary opposites, thereby revealing a much more complex landscape.

RESUMO

Amantes e Loucos: A Oposição Μανία-Φρονεῖν no Fedro de Platão

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Platão, Fedro, Sócrates, Lísias, μανία, φρονεῖν, ἔρως, loucura, lucidez, μαινόμενος, φρόνιμος, ἐραστής, ἐρώμενος, παιδεραστία, ἀλήθεια, λήθη, perspectiva socialmente partilhada, ὑπόθεσις, κινεῖν, palinódia, mito etiológico, ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, ψυχή, ἀνάμνησις, fome, superlativo, φιλοσοφία, asas, ἄνω/κάτω, discurso epidíctico, ἐγκώμιον, ψόγος, σωφροσύνη, ὕβρις.

Nesta tese propomos examinar a primeira metade do *Fedro* (sc. até ao fim da palinódia) à luz da oposição entre as noções de μανία e φρονεῖν, tal como estas são explicita e implicitamente apresentadas nos discursos eróticos. Estes são lidos em diálogo com o que designamos de "discurso" ou "discursos implícitos", i.e., a pluralidade de concepções a respeito de ἔρως, μανία e φρονεῖν que faziam parte da cultura grega antiga. A nossa leitura dos dois discursos contra ἔρως, o discurso de Lísias e o primeiro discurso de Sócrates, dialoga com este contexto cultural, e extrai uma concepção de μανία e φρονεῖν com a qual a palinódia se irá primariamente confrontar.

A nossa leitura da palinódia divide-a em duas secções: a primeira, a apresentação das primeiras três formas de μανία benéfica; a segunda, a narrativa mítica sobre a μανία erótica. Enfatizamos a existência de um abismo entre estes dois momentos no que concerne as suas concepções ontológicas, teológicas e antropológicas. A segunda secção da palinódia é revolucionária não somente em contraste com o "discurso implícito" e os discursos contra ἔρως, mas também em contraste com a própria secção inicial da palinódia – a qual preserva muitas das concepções e pressupostos dos discursos anteriores e da tradição cultural. É para explicar o fundamento, significado e relevância deste abismo que exploramos e discutimos a noção de ὑπόθεσις e o seu papel como operador implícito no *Fedro*.

Da nossa leitura da segunda parte da palinódia resulta claro que a introdução do ὑπερουράνιος τόπος traz consigo uma radical revisão das perspectivas sobre a natureza da realidade e sobre a natureza e condição humanas implícitas nos discursos anteriores e na primeira parte da palinódia. Mostramos que o ὑπερουράνιος τόπος corresponde à projecção de uma multiplicidade de requisitos cognitivos e desiderativos que a nossa perspectiva exige, mas é incapaz de satisfazer. Noutras palavras, mostra-se que a nossa perspectiva vive acima das suas posses, desejando algo que excede em muito aquilo que a sua condição *de facto* lhe permite ter: o superlativo. Disto resulta uma significativa revisão da compreensão do φρονεῖν e da μανία – uma revisão que põe em causa a compreensão habitual destas duas noções como opostos binários, e que revela assim uma paisagem muito mais complexa.

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Chapter I
Preliminary Considerations

μέλλων τελευτᾶν ἐνύπνιον εἶδεν ὡς κύκνος γενόμενος ἀπὸ δένδρου εἰς δένδρον μετέρχεται καὶ ταύτῃ πόνον πλεῖστον παρεῖχε τοῖς ἰξευταῖς. ὃ Σιμμίας ὁ Σωκρατικὸς ἔκρινεν, ὅτι ἄληπτος ἔσται τοῖς μετ' αὐτὸν ἐξηγεῖσθαι βουλομένοις αὐτόν· ἰξευταῖς γὰρ ἐοίκασι οἱ ἐξηγηταὶ τὰς ἐννοίας τῶν ἀρχαίων θηρᾶσθαι πειρώμενοi, ἄληπτος δέ ἐστιν ἐπειδὴ καὶ φυσικῶς καὶ ἠθικῶς καὶ θεολογικῶς καὶ ἁπλῶς πολλαχῶς ἐστὶν ἀκούειν τῶν αὐτοῦ, καθάπερ καὶ τῶν Ὁμήρου.

Olympiodorus, *In Platonis Alcibiadem Commentarii*, 2.156-162.

1. The μανία-φρονεῖν opposition

The main object of this study is what we have designated as the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition. Roughly speaking, the opposition between φρονεῖν and μανία is the Ancient Greek equivalent of the opposition between lucidity and madness. The term lucidity is itself an ambiguous term in need of some clarification. It is a phenomenon that is difficult to isolate, identify and understand. First of all, it seems that there are two different, although closely related fundamental notions of lucidity. The first is formal; the second is concrete. The formal notion of lucidity has to do with the notification of the status of a specific perspective. It acts as a stamp that validates a specific perspective as being able to render reality as it really is. This assures that the perspective is not affected by major mistakes or distortions. This implies a "common-sense" realistic perspective: there is such a thing as a reality separated from the subject, to which the subject has access in one way or another, usually through sense perception. This access can be affected by some mistakes or distortions. But these mistakes or distortions are deemed to be occasional, regional and unimportant. In no way are they usually interpreted as the sign of a major defect.

Overall, the lucid perspective is deemed to be effective and competent in fulfilling its task of revealing reality. As a formal notion, lucidity can be associated with any kind of content. The fundamental tendency seems to be to consider as lucid by default any perspective we ourselves are in possession of. This seems to be an automatic, default, attribution. Only in very exceptional cases will one doubt the generally lucid nature of one's perspective. Even the most apparently insane notions can be accredited as lucid by their bearer. Because the formal notion is applied as an accreditation of a specific content,

lucidity tends to be understood as that specific content that is said to be lucid. Lucidity will then be a concrete notion: not a simple notification of status, but a specific perspective that is considered to be lucid. The formal notion of lucidity is deformalized: it is sane or lucid to think or say or do this and not that.

This specific content is so closely associated with the abstract notion of lucidity that in order to effectively produce a separation, even just for the purposes of an analysis, one has to make a lot of effort. One has to adopt an interrogative point of view in order to do so – which is not the most common way of dealing with one's perspective. Most often, the two notions of lucidity are found mixed together in a bundle: lucidity is the characteristic of a specific perspective; one is lucid if one is the bearer of that perspective. The deformalized lucidity is difficult to understand and analyse also because it tends to be absolutely obvious: it is the environment in which one lives. It only becomes salient either through abstract reasoning or when something goes wrong: e.g., when one experiences something like madness. Otherwise, it is regarded as the obvious, the default setting of a perspective.

But the deformalised lucid perspective is not a perspective that is entirely self-referential and isolated. On the contrary, the community one is part of plays a fundamental role in determining the content of this deformalisation. The lucid perspective is usually associated with a specific socially shared perspective. More often than not, the subject of that perspective is a "we" and not an "I". Each person is the recipient and bearer of a complex, deep and sometimes even contradictory perspective that is, by default, considered to be sane. Each individual uses this common perspective as the standard by which his or her own lucidity is measured. One tends to look to others as guarantors of one's own lucidity: it is lucid the one whose perspective does not radically deviate from the socially shared perspective. If one sees things that others cannot, one is generally considered to be seeing "things that are not real"[1]. As the polar opposite of lucidity, madness is interpreted and attributed using the socially shared perspective as a standard. One will be mad if one perceives reality in a radically different way from the one endorsed by the socially shared perspective.

[1] In exceptional circumstances, this can be interpreted differently, as the result of some special ability or gift recognised as such by the community. This is, for example, the case of the three first kinds of beneficial μανία described by Socrates at the beginning of the palinode (244a8-245a8). This will be analysed in chapter IV of this study.

This highlights a relevant feature of the relationship between lucidity and madness: the standard of lucidity is, to a certain extent, external and beyond anyone's individual control. It is not up to each individual to define and determine the boundaries of lucidity; this is something that is part of the socially shared perspective, something one inherits and shares with all the other members of one's community. But this external character is not absolute. This is not lived as something absolutely alien. Each one, as a member of the community, silently adopts these standards and participates in them. These are defined and lived by a "we", not a "they". In those circumstances in which the standards are violated, however, this "we" turns into a "they". Madness puts one outside of the community; it makes one a stranger, a foreigner, an exile. It introduces an overwhelming element of distortion into the perspective; the perspective is no longer able to render reality as it really is, or, to be more precise, as the commonly shared perspective recognises it. By having a different recognition of reality, the maddened individual is estranged from the community he used to be a part of.

But there is a second possible element of estrangement or alienation at stake here. In many cases, the individual affected by madness will no longer recognise the commonly shared perspective as the standard by which he is to judge the lucidity of his perspective. In this case, the mad perspective attributes to itself the stamp of approval of lucidity, in complete opposition to the deformalisation of lucidity that constitutes the commonly shared perspective. Madness, therefore, operates an inversion of the attribution of lucidity from the perspective commonly held by the community to the isolated perspective of the maddened individual. The mad person is all alone within the world created by madness, claiming him or herself to be lucid. From his or her own perspective, he or she is not mad; from the point of view of the community, however, the madness is obvious. This creates a peculiar dynamics at the core of the opposition between madness and lucidity. Lucidity is very often the state one considers oneself to be in – especially if that attribution is confirmed by being in accordance with the commonly shared perspective. But it is also possible for a mad invidual to claim lucidity in spite of and in opposition to the commonly shared perspective. Madness is usually a determination attributed to others, whereas lucidity is claimed for oneself and those who share our own views. This does not exclude the possibility of the mad individual being able to recognise him or herself as such. In that case, the commonly shared perspective keeps its force as the standard of lucidity, creating a conflict between what the individual perceives as reality and what the

commonly shared perspective prescribes as being real. This constitutes a peculiar case of alienation – an alienation simultaneously from the community and from oneself. The individual in this situation is dilacerated between two competing perspectives – one having the factual authority of actual perception; the other the prescriptive power of a perspective shared, endorsed and enforced by the community one is a part of. A less extreme modality of this occurs when these two perspectives are not simultaneous, i.e., when a period of complete madness – the madness that claims to be lucid – is followed by a return to the commonly shared perspective normally recognised as lucid. Retrospectively, the period of madness will be recognised as such by the now lucid individual – but this will usually be accompanied by a feeling of alienation, by a difficulty in recognising the mad individual as the same as the one who is lucid now and was lucid before the outbreak of madness. What becomes clear from these examples is that madness is, amongst other things, a disturbance of identity – especially considering that one's identity is also dependent on the relationship one has to others, to the community.

But lucidity and madness also have a very visible and noticeable side to them: they both manifest themselves and are perceived through behaviour and actions. The relationship between behaviour and lucidity – or its opposite – is very close. Behaviour depends on knowledge at several different levels. It requires an assessment of the situation one is in; it depends on a multiplicity of theses regarding the nature of human happiness and what constitutes licit behaviour; and it also requires a ponderation of the possible consequences. In order to act well, to act effectively towards a goal, but also to identify which goals should be pursued and which should not, one has to be lucid – though lucidity is not necessarily a guarantee that the action will have the intended consequence. Madness disturbs this in a fundamental way. It can distort the perspective in such a way as to cause an erroneous assessment of the situation; it can make one make mistakes regarding happiness and morality; and it can result in disastrous miscalculations in what regards the consequences of one's actions. It can most of all change the way one perceives reality in such a way as to originate completely absurd and inappropriate actions. This is to say that one of the fundamental characteristics of those who are deemed mad is the often absurd and disastrous ways in which they lead their life. They seem to lack the cybernetic abilities, so to speak, to navigate through life and to act in their own benefit, often with ruinous consequences.

However, the lack of ability to understand the situation one is also made patent by the lack of conformity with the social standards of acceptable behaviour. The mad person behaves oddly from the point of view of the community he is supposed to be a member of. This means that the mad person will be identified by how they act and how they lead their life. This also includes the cybernetic component, as it were, since acting against one's own interest is normally deemed as an absurd form of behaviour by the community. Of course, this also illustrates the likely distance between the perspective of the mad person and that of the community, not only in what regards the diagnosis of the situation, but also in what regards what constitutes one's self-interest. The aims and goals of the mad person might be very diferente from the ones endorsed by the community. It will come as no surprise, though, that this latter difference will also be interpreted by the community as a symptom of lack of lucidity.

Behaving madly, i.e., in a way that is not comprehensible from a lucid perspective, is a fundamental component of madness. Madness is alienating; it drives the mad away from the community. From the point of view of lucidity, the mad cannot be understood. Lucidity does not possess categories with which to understand madness from within. Madness is only seen from outside, as something completely other. As such, it is recognised by its external manifestations: behaviour. Behaviour therefore becomes the main instrument in identifying someone as mad. When someone's behaviour becomes extreme, incomprehensible from a lucid perspective, incompatible with the commonly shared perspective, that person will be deemed to be mad[2].

The opposition between lucidity and its absence was in Ancient Greek culture understood as the opposition between φρονεῖν (the general term for such a phenomenon) and μανία. Μανία is the opposite of φρονεῖν. It is situated beyond the boundaries of the realm of understanding. It has to be understood from within these boundaries, with all the limitations that arise from that. It is as if one were trying to know a country just by looking

[2] Madness is the most extreme form of transgression of the standards of lucidity. But the vagueness of these standards can cause the identification of madness itself to become vague. Almost anything that transgresses the vague standards of lucidity can be designated as madness in some way or another. The fact that lucidity is so common, the default setting, so to speak, means that its opposite can become less and less defined and determined. Any behaviour that goes beyond or against the norm, any strange utterance can be the object of a hyperbolic or rhetorical accusation of madness. Madness can therefore become a devalued currency. This modality of madness, rhetorical madness, is not what we are looking for in this study. But it will be somewhat relevant inasmuch as accusations of madness, regardless of how exaggerated and inappropriate they may be, can say quite a lot about the standards of lucidity at stake, and how strange and unusual behaviour is seen under the light of a specific socially shared deformalisation of lucidity.

from this side of the border. Since it is this strange and extraordinary occurrence that is the most salient, φρονεῖν tends to be made clearer in opposition to it. When everything goes well, there is no need to talk about lucidity or φρονεῖν. It is in moments of crisis that one has the need to invoke it. It is for this reason that it makes sense to talk about these opposites as being illuminated by one another. It is in contrast with μανία that we can more clearly see what is considered to be the deformalized φρονεῖν. It is the experience of disturbance, of anomaly, of alienation that allows us to see more clearly what is at stake in the experience of normality and lucidity.

This is an experience that has been portrayed time and time again in many different ways, from the raging warriors of Homer to the delusions of the Euripidean Pentheus, from the incomprehensible utterances of Cassandra to the infanticidal rage of Heracles, from the odd behaviour of Cambyses to the strange obsession of the Aristophanic Philocleon. All these portrayals of μανία are varied and rich in detail, yet they point out in a different albeit generic direction: away from normality, or what is ordinarily and socially recognised as being lucidity. Μανία is out of the ordinary, an exceptional and abnormal event, an inkling of the bizarre and the odd in the midst of the normal and the perfectly understandable. Μανία shows itself when the fabric of normality tears, when the ordinary and expected flow of life is suddenly and unpredictably interrupted. In all representations of μανία, it is portrayed as that which seldom happens, as the exception. And yet, it startles, frightens and awes whoever bears witness to it. It is out of the ordinary, but it also grabs your attention, forces you to look at it and marvel. The rare occurrences of μανία open to an unknown territory, to a region of human existence which one normally has no access to. It is a region characterised by obscurity and confusion, by a perspective so different and distorted to the point of being both unrecognizable and incomprehensible.

The relative rarity of such occurrences does nothing to diminish the fear that they provoke. Μανία appears as the negative double of the usually sane perspective, as a possibility that is always lurking in the shadows, ready to snatch and take hold of us. It is the ever-present possibility that denies the possibility of sanity and lucidity. As such, it is the ghost that haunts our normal, healthy perspective. As far as we normally understand it, it may rarely be seen – but the possibility of its presence cannot be altogether ignored, and the danger it carries is too great to be dismissed lightly.

From what we have seen so far it is not difficult to understand how fundamental and crucial a problem this is. In fact, the opposition between madness and lucidity, or, to use the Greek terms we will most often employ in this study, μανία and φρονεῖν, hit at the heart of something very basic: the very way in which we are able to recognise and understand reality. To be able to see things as they really are, so to speak, is an ability that we all believe we have. It is also an ability without which all the rest falls apart. What is at stake here is not just the trustworthiness of this or that specific cognitive content, but rather the reliability and effectiveness of the form of access to any cognitive content whatsoever. Lack of lucidity does not entail just failure on a limited or regional level – it entails a global failure of recognising things as they really are. If this lack of lucidity is accompanied – as it usually is – by the conviction that lucidity is not in fact lacking, then we have a recipe for disaster: a perspective that is incapable of seeing things as they really are, but that believes that it is effective and reliable. This has an overwhelming existential impact. That is to say that we rely on our lucidity to navigate through life, to assess the situation we are in, to make our choices and decisions, to act and react, in short, to live. Without this implicit and perhaps blind confidence in our ability to see things as they really are, such navigation would be impossible. It is so clear that what is at stake in this matter is more than just a curious or merely academic problem. Rather, this is a problem of vital importance in the proper sense of the word – that is to say that this is a problem in which our own life is at stake.

It is also clear from what we have seen so far that this is a vast and complex problem – a problem that would require a massive and overall revision of our perspective in all its complexity to be properly treated. But we are not going to tackle this monumental problem in all its detail. The focus of this study is much more limited and narrow. We will use as our main guide one specific work of one specific author: Plato's *Phaedrus.*

2. Narrowing the focus of our attention to the *Phaedrus*

2.1. Possibility and meaning of focusing the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition in the narrow scope of the *Phaedrus*

Any approach to a philosophical problem faces risks and challenges. When the philosophical problem at stake is one that regards our own access to reality and the effectiveness of our perspective, these risks and challenges multiply. The first challenge one faces is to decide where and how to begin. This is a decision with no definitive right answer. There are multiple possible entrances. Any point that might be chosen as a starting point will be affected by several problems and limitations. This specific difficulty becomes even greater when we realise that any journey of philosophical discovery is ultimately a combat against the unknown. There are few known coordinates, few established and well known landmarks that might help us through. There is a lot of uncertainty, speculation and educated (or less than educated) guesses. It is, in short, a journey of exploration into unknown lands and uncharted waters. One has to move slowly, tentatively, always looking around for any sign of danger, for any changes in the landscape. As with a journey of exploration, the more one finds, the more the overall picture of the terrain covered will change. What is found over that valley or beyond that bay will alter our understanding of the miles already travelled. The perspective on the whole, and also on each segment of the whole, will potentially change as new elements are discovered. The landscape being explored has a labyrinthine nature: there is no perspective on the labyrinth as a whole; any insight on the configuration of the labyrinth can only be acquired step by step, inch by inch, providing very little knowledge of out lies ahead. To engage with a philosophical problem is therefore akin to stepping into a labyrinthine landscape. As one does and cannot know the configuration of the labyrinth before starting the exploration, one cannot know what the best entry point is beforehand. One has to make a decision and take a risk. Once inside, one is effectively lost, and it is only by going forward, by exploring, that one will be able to find a way, in hope of understanding the configuration of the labyrinth. This work of exploration will become far easier if one can use the maps drawn by previous explorers – bolder, braver and more capable explorers than us, preferably.

This labyrinth is only the first of a series of labyrinths we will have to go through in this study. This first labyrinth corresponds to the philosophical problem at stake: the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition. But there are at least two more of these labyrinthine landscapes left. The first of these corresponds to the explorer we have chosen to follow, Plato, and the map he has left behind, the *corpus platonicum*. Plato, as any other explorer, represents just one lonely and limited perspective into the unknown landscape we are trying to

explore. The maps that this particular explorer has left behind, the set of texts collectively known as the *corpus platonicum*, are so intricate, so complex, so difficult to follow that they become themselves wild and unknown landscapes, or a labyrinth or maze. That is to say that the *corpus platonicum* is itself a labyrinth. It consists of a plurality of texts, with different approaches, themes, settings, situations, corresponding to a variety of points of view and points of entry into a variety of philosophical problems. The maps that Plato has drawn are maps that do not reveal themselves, but rather that require a substantial effort to decipher. Unlike normal maps, they do not show clearly the landscape, and even less so the itinerary that one should follow, but they rather hint, suggest, and sometimes even purposefully mislead. As such, Plato does not behave as a guide, but rather as someone that leaves behind not charts, but subtle intimations of the features that compose the unknown landscape. This peculiar method of transmission turns the *corpus platonicum* into a multiplicity of puzzle pieces. Each text, or each perspective presented within the texts, corresponds to those pieces, each a fragment of the philosophical perspective that produced them. Unlike a puzzle, however, we cannot refer to the image in the box for orientation, nor are we even informed of how many pieces there are. And, to make matters even more complicated, the puzzle cannot be completed by the mere correct juxtaposition of the pieces. Each piece admits a multiplicity of possible connections with other pieces, thereby creating the possibility of a puzzle with a multiplicity of variable configurations. Each one of the pieces that compose the labyrinthine puzzle that is the *corpus platonicum* is itself a labyrinth in need of exploration – the third in the series of labyrinths we have mentioned. The complexity of the puzzle is compounded by the complexity of the individual pieces, each one a puzzle unto itself, composed of a multiplicity of pieces. To try to face a philosophical problem by using a Platonic dialogue as a starting-point is akin to entering a maze within a maze within a maze, at all times under the risk of becoming completely lost.

But there are yet more difficulties we have to be aware of. For this study, we have chosen the *Phaedrus* as the point of entry into the labyrinth within a labyrinth that is the *corpus platonicum*. But the *Phaedrus*, as any other piece of the *corpus platonicum*, is itself a labyrinth. It is a labyrinth in what regards its own multifaceted, changing and seemingly disjointed composition. But it is also a labyrinth in what regards the variety of aspects that give shape to the dialogue: its dramatic form, its relationship with rhetoric, the myriad of philosophical problems it addresses or merely alludes to, the repeated use

of mythical elements, etc. But perhaps the factor that makes the *Phaedrus* most resemble a labyrinth is a characteristic that it shares with all other Platonic dialogues: the fact that is not a declarative text, that it is not written in the form of a treatise, but rather as an anti-treatise. The significance of the non-declarative nature of Platonic dialogues will be addressed in more detail later in this chapter, but it is important to stress at this stage that this constitutes a fundamental layer of difficulty to our study.

Choosing the *Phaedrus* is therefore risky and presents several problems and limitations. The fundamental problem we are dealing with is universal in nature: it has to do with the status of our perspective as being able to render reality as it really is. It affects the whole of our access or contact with reality. What we are proposing to do with this study is to focus on a specific work by a specific author, written in a very specific historical and cultural setting. This constitutes a considerable limitation to the scope of inquiry, especially when considering the wideness and universality of the fundamental philosophical problem we are dealing with. In a way, it is like trying to have a clear vision of a very large room through a very small keyhole. The picture we will end up with will necessarily be limited. We will only have access to part of what we are searching for. What is left out, what we cannot see through the keyhole, will remain hidden. How important what remains hidden is to understand the phenomenon is something that can only be ascertained when it is no longer hidden. It is possible that the limited perspective provided by our approach through a single work of a single author to such a vast philosophical problem might be distorted because of its partiality. This, however, is a problem that would affect any kind of approach, from any kind of angle. It is impossible to know if the approach is correct until the work is all done – and the work is only all done when the problem is analysed in all its complexity, when all possible ways of dealing with it and addressing it are exhausted.

In the end, the way into the labyrinth, the itinerary chosen to explore the unknown landscape, is a choice, a decision. It is always risky and uncertain. To undertake an exhaustive analysis of all possible ways of addressing the philosophical problem at stake in this study is a task that would far surpass the time available to us. What we are going to do, then, is quite different from this exhaustive approach. We will follow the narrow, limited path already drawn for us by Plato, while trying to understand the path itself and what is visible from it.

This problem, however, is not exclusive to the *Phaedrus* – or to any other work within the *corpus platonicum*, for that matter. In addition to this general problem, our study will be faced with several other that are peculiar to the *Phaedrus*. As we shall see, the dramatic setting, the structure, the characters and the nature of the speeches of the *Phaedrus* will present additional difficulties to our exploration of the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition. It is within the *Phaedrus* that we will attempt to find some of the elements to help us begin to understand the complex issues surrounding the notion of lucidity and its opposite. This does not mean that we will not make use of other pieces of the *corpus platonicum*. At many stages, also due to the peculiar nature of the *corpus platonicum*, it will be indispensable to make use of other Platonic texts to understand what is at stake in the *Phaedrus*. But those will be used mainly as instruments for our analysis of the thesis and arguments we will have to deal with in the *Phaedrus*. The *Phaedrus* will remain at the centre of our exploration of the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition.

2.2. The importance of the *Phaedrus* in the *corpus platonicum*, and regarding the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition

It is almost a cliché to say that the *Phaedrus* is at the very centre of the *corpus platonicum*. The centrality of this dialogue, however, does not reside in its possible chronological position within the works of Plato[3], but rather in something else, noticed by Schleiermacher. A proponent of an early date of composition of the *Phaedrus*, Schleiermacher nonetheless believed to have found in this dialogue the programme of the whole of Plato's work, the themes, notions and problems to be developed in later

[3] The date of composition of the *Phaedrus* has been the subject of substantial debate. Certain ancient authors were of the opinion that this was Plato's very first dialogue: DIOGENES LAERTIUS III 38; HERMIAS 9, 14-19, OLYMPIODORUS, *Vita Platonis* III. This opinion is shared by SCHLEIERMACHER (*Introductions to the Dialogues of Plato*, New York, Arno Press, 1973, 59ff.). This view, however, has been universally rejected by modern critics. The debate between modern critics has rather concentrated in establishing the chronological position of the *Phaedrus* in relation to the other dialogues, especially in relation to the *Symposium* and *Republic*. For an overall account of the debate, see RITTER, C. (ed.), *Platons Dialog Phaidros*, Leipzig, Meiner, 1914, 2-7; ROBIN, L. (ed.), *Platon: oeuvres complètes*, vol. IV, part 3, *Phèdre*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1933, II-IX; DE VRIES, G., *A Commentary on the* Phaedrus *of Plato*, Amsterdam, Hakkert, 1969, 7ff.; HEITSCH, E. (ed.), *Platon: Phaidros. Übersetzung und Kommentar*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993, 232-233; SALA, E., *Il Fedro di Platone. Commento*, Diss. Padua, 2007, 16-25; YUNIS, H. (ed.), *Plato: Phaedrus*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010, 22-25. The consensus seems to be that the *Phaedrus* is one of the dialogues of the so-called "middle period". On the dating of the dialogues in general, and, especially, the "developmental hypothesis", see p. 48, note 24, below.

dialogues[4]. Robin, who considers the *Phaedrus* to be what is conventionally called a middle period dialogue, nonetheless sees in this dialogue "un raccourci de l'ensemble"[5]. Although disagreeing in what regards the chronological date of the *Phaedrus*, these two critics agree, however, that the *Phaedrus* represents a fundamental cornerstone of the *corpus platonicum*. It either anticipates or leads to many of the problems, notions and ideas found elsewhere in the *corpus*. One would be right in observing that, given the specific nature of the *corpus platonicum*, this is not at all surprising. One can find references, allusions and thematic similarities in all dialogues. In some cases, the dialogues seem to be engaged in a chess match with one another, sometimes in flagrant contradiction. It is difficult to read the *Phaedrus* without being transported back to other fundamental pieces of the *corpus platonicum*. The variety of themes and subjects has that effect. The speeches on ἔρως almost immediately invite comparison and cross-analysis with the erotic speeches of the *Symposium*. The discussions regarding rhetoric send us back to the *Gorgias*. The descriptions of the ψυχή invoke the *Phaedo* and *Republic*. The extensive use of the notion of ἀνάμνησις helps us understand the use of this notion in the *Phaedo* and the *Meno*. The points of contact with *Republic* are extensive: dialectics, education, and, what is most important for the purpose of this study, the status of commonly known reality and the relationship between truth and appearance. All these themes and many more can be found throughout the *Phaedrus* and make it an invaluable piece at the very heart of the philosophical problems that populate the *corpus platonicum*.

Of course, the same could be said about several other dialogues. Dialogues such as the ones we have just mentioned, but also others like the *Theaetetus* or the *Sophist*, could appropriately be deemed central in this sense. This is not at all surprising. The peculiar labyrinthine nature of the *corpus platonicum* admits a variety of possible points of entrance. The dialogues establish lines of communication with one another, thematically, conceptually, dramatically. They are interconnected and the choice of point of entrance will lead to more choices regarding the itinerary to be followed. To choose the *Phaedrus* as the point of entrance, and to follow an itinerary mainly determined by what is to be found in this specific dialogue cannot be proclaimed as the only possible approach to the problem of the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition, not even necessarily the best. The possibility that entering the labyrinth of this specific philosophical problem through

[4] SCHLEIERMACHER, *idem.*
[5] ROBIN, *op. cit.*, VI.

this specific door will only cause us to be led astray cannot be entirely excluded. It is a risky decision – and this is a risk we have to be aware of.

The reasons for the choice of this specific dialogue as the main focus of this study go beyond its general importance within the *corpus platonicum*. The subject of our investigation is the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition. The *Phaedrus* was chosen as the focus of our analysis because, to put it simply, it constitutes the most extensive, complex and, in our opinion, valuable treatment of this subject within the *corpus platonicum*. It is the dialogue where μανία and its opposite, φρονεῖν, take a protagonist role. This statement might surprise a few readers, used as they are to the idea that the *Phaedrus* is about ἔρως or beauty or rhetoric or philosophical education. Certainly, if these are the themes of the *Phaedrus*, the protagonists cannot be μανία or φρονεῖν, but ἔρως or beauty or rhetoric or education or any other notion that we might think is the real theme of the dialogue. Certainly, the protagonist notion of a dialogue will have to be the concept or problem or phenomenon that is at stake in the discussion, namely, the one that one is trying to define or understand. In a word, the protagonist will have to be what the dialogue is about and to say that this is μανία or φρονεῖν is to ignore the importance of phenomena that are explicitly at the forefront of the discussions found in the *Phaedrus*. But we are not saying that these notions are not what the *Phaedrus* is about: it is about all that and much more. What we are saying is that the main question we are trying to answer is not what the *Phaedrus* is about, but rather what is the notion or phenomenon that allows us to understand the erotic speeches – all of them, not just the palinode – and the discussions around them not merely as rhetorical exercises, but also as possibly meaningful ontological and anthropological statements. What a specific dialogue is about, even when the answer to this question is relatively uncontroversial, is not all that relevant when compared with the philosophical theses and discussions within the dialogue and, especially, what those can tell us about the philosophical problems we are concerned about[6].

[6] The complex and multifaceted nature of the *Phaedrus* has warranted a long and complex debate regarding the "true" theme of the dialogue. This debate seems to be all the more pertinent since there are two apparently obvious candidates: rhetoric and ἔρως. This becomes even more problematic since the two themes are not treated together, so to speak, but there are different sections of the dialogue that concentrate on each of them. So the "first part" of the dialogue, up to the end of Socrates' palinode (257b6) seems to be dedicated to ἔρως; the "second part", from this point onwards, is mainly a discussion on rhetoric. The difference between the two parts is quite stark: they vary not only in predominant theme, but also in structure and tone. The first part is dominated by relatively long set speeches on the subject of ἔρως, with interludes of discussion that also contain dramatic episodes that move the dialogue forward. In this, it

This study is based on the idea that the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition is an important key to understand the *Phaedrus* and that the *Phaedrus* is full of important elements for the understanding of μανία and its opposite, φρονεῖν. However, apart from the explicit

resembles the *Symposium.* The second part is characterised by relatively short exchanges (however, with some exceptionally long passages, e.g., the passages corresponding the myth of the cicadas [258e6-d8] and the myth of Teuth [274c5-275b2]), with the interplay between question and answer we are familiar with from other Platonic dialogues. For this reason, the search for the "true" theme of the *Phaedrus* has long been associated with the search for the principle of unity of a whole composed of two parts that seem to be not very strongly connected. Several proposals have been put forward regarding the true theme of the dialogue. Several of these are already listed by Hermias (COUVREUR, P. (ed.), *Hermiae Alexandrini in Platonis Phaedrum scholia*, Paris, Librairie Emile Bouillon, 1901, 8, 15ff.): περὶ ἔρωτος (8, 16), περὶ ῥητορικῆς (8, 18), περὶ ψυχικῆς ἀρχῆς (8, 27), περὶ ψυχῆς (8, 28), περὶ τἀγαθοῦ (8, 30), περὶ τοῦ πρώτου καλοῦ (9, 5), περὶ τοῦ παντοδαποῦ καλοῦ (9, 9). For modern critics, WERNER, D., Plato's *Phaedrus* and the Problem of Unity, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 32 (2007), 91-137, especially 94-109, provides a very thorough catalogue. In the end, the search for the "true" theme of the *Phaedrus* is based on the dubious assumption regarding this dialogue in particular, and Platonic dialogues in general that there is such a thing as a single true theme for a specific dialogue. This is not altogether unreasonable, considering that even in Antiquity there were attempts to pinpoint and establish these themes, through the means of assigning conventional subtitles to the traditional titles of the dialogues (see JOYAL, M. (ed.), *The Platonic Theages: An Introduction, Commentary, and Critical Edition*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000, 195-196). These subtitles isolate a specific thematic nucleus of the dialogue and give it a leading role. This is already based on a reading of the dialogues that, while not ignoring the thematic variety of each of them, nevertheless puts those other themes in a secondary or even ancillary role regarding what is identified as the leading theme. This characteristic is shared by most attempts to isolate a main theme for each dialogue. These attempts, however, are a way of guiding one's gaze towards a specific aspect of the dialogue, which, notwithstanding its apparent salient nature, can limit one's ability to be confronted by, analyse and explore the multiplicity of paths that can be opened within the dialogue. To say that a dialogue is about "X" can represent a grave simplification of a reality that is characterised by its labyrinthine nature. Each dialogue contains a multiplicity of themes, with discussions that point in different and varied directions, opening up different avenues of inquiry at each point. It is particularly difficult to submit the *Phaedrus* to this kind of reading, probably because none of the two themes commonly considered to be most prominent can gain the upper hand over the other. To read the *Phaedrus* as a dialogue mainly about rhetoric leaves behind many particularly salient aspects of the treatment of ἔρως, and forces us to ask questions regarding the role and suitability of ἔρως as a theme of rhetorical ἐπίδειξις. To read the *Phaedrus* as a dialogue predominantly about ἔρως risks dismissing most of the discussion on rhetoric and raises the question about the significance of using rhetorical set pieces to approach this subject, instead of the more "traditional" approach of dialectics. However, it is not only the search for the one true theme that is beset by problems. To search for a finite number of "true" themes may also lead one in a very narrow and limited path, with the added difficulty of forcing one to answer the question regarding the connection between this multiplicity of themes. In the end, even if we were to accept the assumption that Platonic dialogues have one or, for that matter, a number of true themes, we would still be confronted with the problem of the relevance of that *quoad nos.* In other words, even if we consider that, for example, the *Phaedrus* is a dialogue about ἔρως *and* rhetoric, that does not mean that we, in our reading of the *Phaedrus*, should look at the dialogue to understand these phenomena only. Like all other Platonic dialogues, it can be the point of entrance to a multiplicity of philosophical problems. For the purposes of this study, it is not particularly relevant what the *Phaedrus*' "true theme" is, if there is such a thing. Since we are using the *Phaedrus* as a point of entrance into the labyrinth of questions regarding the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition, our aim is not to solve this difficult matter. Nor will we be claiming that the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition is the actual true theme of the *Phaedrus*. We are not in the business of putting forward candidates or pretenders to that title. Rather, our business is to explore as much as possible the perspectives on this subject that are delineated within the dialogue. That being said, the subject of ἔρως will most likely receive a lot more attention than rhetoric, owing to the fact that most of the perspectives about the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition are introduced and explored within speeches and discussions regarding ἔρως. This should not be interpreted as an endorsement of ἔρως as the one true theme of the *Phaedrus*. In this respect, this study's position will remain one of vigilant neutrality. For the related problem of the unity of the *Phaedrus*, see p. 17, note 7, below.

references to μανία, which are mainly concentrated within or around the palinode, the almost permanent presence of this phenomenon may be easy to miss. The dialogue focuses on the themes of ἔρως and rhetoric in sometimes spectacular ways. It is therefore not accidental that most discussions surrounding the question regarding the 'real theme' of this dialogue are concerned with these two notions and how to understand their joint treatment in the *Phaedrus*. In this context, μανία seems to be a secondary matter, only alluded to as a way of understanding ἔρως, first as a destructive force in human life, and then, with the palinode, as the overwhelming energy that puts one on the path towards truth, i.e., as a philosophical force. The notion of φρονεῖν, on the other hand, seems to be all but absent. There is no *explicit* treatment of this notion, no explicit discussion of what lucidity and sanity could be. One has to dig through the dialogue, read between the lines, detect and reveal the assumptions to get a portrait of what could be understood as the state opposed to μανία, in any of its incarnations. It is only after a certain degree of analysis that one starts to see clearly that in this dialogue the notion of φρονεῖν is being implicitly explored within the discussions regarding what is then identified as a modality of μανία, namely ἔρως. It is only through repeated readings, trying to see beyond the obvious, that one can start to have a glimpse of the importance of the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition within this dialogue.

That is what, so far, my experience as a reader of the *Phaedrus* has taught me. It was the reading of this dialogue that ignited the interest in the main subject matter of this study: the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition. At first, the interest on the *Phaedrus* was mainly focused on the subject of ἔρως and, especially, the fascinatingly complex account of the phenomenon present in the palinode. In between all the dazzling images, the rapid changes of focus and the vivid descriptions, it is easy to lose sight of many of the undercurrents and even of many of the phenomena that are explicitly addressed in that text. My first readings of the palinode, concentrated, as they were, in the subject of ἔρως, understood then in a very narrow way, lost sight of the obvious importance that the notion of μανία has for what is at stake in that text. The explicit references to μανία were overlooked and the connection between ἔρως and μανία seen as a simple manner of speaking, more a hyperbole than anything else. It was only after a while that I finally recognised what is perhaps the most striking – and now for me the most obvious – aspect of the palinode: the fact that it turns the world upside down. In order to produce an ἐγκώμιον of ἔρως, Socrates has to go to all the trouble of creating a myth that proposes

to completely alter one's perspective on reality and on the status of one's perspective. From the sovereign, in control perspective presupposed in Lysias' speech and at least partly endorsed by Socrates' first speech, one is transported away to a perspective that is from the very start shown to be defective and, later, presented as the result of a severe mutilation. That this is done in an attempt to rehabilitate ἔρως as a form of μανία is all the more surprising, especially when we consider how much easier it might have been to follow a different strategy to produce an ἐγκώμιον of love. Socrates has to go as far as to produce an ontological, theological and anthropological revolution because he is trying to do something more than praising ἔρως in the traditional way, through the use of pederastic τόποι. He is trying to introduce an alternative perspective on reality and human nature: an alternative to the socially shared perspective of which Lysias is the first spokesman in this dialogue and whose assumptions, to a great extent, the Socrates of the first speech shares. Socrates' praise of ἔρως is only possible within the framework of the ontological, theological and anthropological revolution and constitutes perhaps its most impressive expression.

The story of the *Phaedrus* is, to a great degree, a story of the displacement of the everyday, socially shared perspective by a different one. The socially shared perspective is normally taken as φρόνιμος. But, perhaps more significantly, the socially shared perspective is assimilated with the idea of φρονεῖν. A lucid perspective is a perspective endorsed and approved by the community one is a member of. As we shall see in this study, what Socrates does is displace this socially shared perspective and put something altogether different in its place. But, whereas the relationship the normal Athenian would have with the socially shared perspective would be of possession and compliance, the relationship human beings have with the alternative φρόνιμος perspective introduced in the palinode is the exact opposite. It is, in fact, a non-existent relationship. The set of perspectives introduced in the palinode are entirely new, and, from the point of view of the socially shared perspective, altogether implausible. In absolute contrast with the socially shared perspective, the picture Plato draws of the human condition in its relationship with φρονεῖν oscillates between *almost* complete oblivion and a form of φρονεῖν that is almost paradoxically characterised not by the possession of positive knowledge, but by the awareness of the non-φρόνιμος nature of everyday perspective and the urge to overcome the limitations that perspective imposes.

But the fundamental role of the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition is not limited to the palinode. Looking back from the point of view of the palinode, it becomes clear that the opposition between μανία and φρονεῖν also plays a fundamental, albeit less conspicuous role, in the previous speeches. The surprising and paradoxical thesis the first two speeches of the *Phaedrus* have to defend tends to dazzle and dominate the reader's perspective. But both of them portray the lover in terms that are similar to the ones applied to describe madmen. They present a picture of madness and, in the case of Socrates' first speech, a model to understand madness. The way they understand erotic madness also implies a specific understanding of φρονεῖν, to which it is contrasted. Looking back from the palinode to the previous speeches, and to the prelude and the interludes as well, it becomes clear that there is an undercurrent of μανία throughout the first part of the *Phaedrus*.

This undercurrent extends to the second part of the *Phaedrus*, the part that follows the palinode. Although it is not our purpose to discuss the *vexata quaestio* of the unity (or lack thereof) of the *Phaedrus*, it is important to suggest in what way the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition plays an important role even in the discussion about rhetoric that dominates the second part of the dialogue[7]. After the palinode, an apparent radical change of subject,

[7] The unity (or possible lack thereof) of the *Phaedrus* has attracted a lot of scholarly attention. The stark division between what we have identified before as the two parts of the dialogue has probably impressed most readers of the *Phaedrus* and motivated scholars to search for a unifying principle. The problem is all the more relevant, since unity and organic composition is presented in this dialogue as a fundamental requirement of any λόγος (264c2-5). The suggested unifying principle has often, though not always, assumed the form of a unifying theme or themes. On this, see note 4, above. Several critics have suggested non-thematic solutions for the unity problem. Critics like HELMBOLD and HOLTHER (The Unity of Plato's *Phaedrus*, *University of California Publications in Classical Philology* 14 (1952), 387-417), PLASS (The Unity of the *Phaedrus*, *Symbolae Osloenses* 43 (1968), 7-38), RUTHERFORD (*The Art of Plato: Ten Essays in Platonic Interpretation*, London, Duckworth, 1995, 261) and WERNER (*op. cit.* 115ff.) have emphasized the dramatic and literary elements that provide unity to the *Phaedrus*. Other critics have suggested that the so-called "problem of unity" is the product of a perspective that imposes modern and anachronistic demands on a text produced under a completely different understanding of what textual unity actually consists of. For Malcolm HEATH, (The Unity of Plato's *Phaedrus*, *Oxford Studies on Ancient Philosophy* 7 (1989), 151-173), the *Phaedrus* possesses formal unity, a "unity of dramatic structure" (161). Our expectation of material or thematic unity, however, is misplaced. Heath argues that what is required in texts like the Platonic dialogues, tragedies and comedies is that their themes "should all be severally appropriate to the function or functions of the genre in question" (163). In the case of philosophical texts, the function is "instilling virtue or promoting philosophical understanding" (172), which the *Phaedrus* clearly does. FERRARI (The Unity of the *Phaedrus*: A Response, *Dialogos (Hellenic Studies Review)* 1 (1994), 21-25), on the other hand, argues that the *Phaedrus* is unified by its function as an epideictic text, produced with the purpose of "outdoing the rhetoricians (and especially Isocrates) at their own game". Another possible non-thematic solution stresses the formal and structural unity of the dialogue. This is proposed by WERNER (*op. cit.* 120ff.), who, borrowing from GRISWOLD (*Self-Knowledge in Plato's* Phaedrus, University Park, Penn., Pennsylvania State University, 1986, 218), characterises the structure of the *Phaedrus* as "palinodic". What Griswold and Werner mean is that the dialogue possesses a peculiar structure, which consists in an apparently settled presentation of perspectives on the discussed subjects, then followed by other, different, perspectives that undermine the supposedly settled nature of the previous perspective and produce a recantation, or palinode. In Werner's words, "the *Phaedrus* has a kind of outward

or, at least, emphasis, occurs: before this point, the dialogue seems to be mostly focused on the multiplicity of perspectives on ἔρως; after this point, however, the concern seems to shift towards rhetoric itself. This does not mean that rhetoric is not present in the first part of the *Phaedrus*; it is present throughout the whole dialogue. The difference is that, before the palinode, the discussion of rhetoric is done regarding a specific theme, ἔρως; after the palinode, the discussion becomes formal. If we adopt the interpretation that the main theme of the *Phaedrus* is, from start to finish, rhetoric and the multiple ways in which it can relate to the truth, then this shift is less radical than one would otherwise assume. This point of view, however, may lead us to underestimate the importance of ἔρως as a theme for rhetoric display and discussion. The speeches on ἔρως would be seen as mere exemplars of different rhetorical techniques and, most of all, of different ways in which what one says can relate to the truth. The primary concern would not be the subject matter, ἔρως, but rather the mode of communication. The subject matter, then, would be entirely accidental or instrumental in relation to the true purpose: illustrating different varieties of rhetoric. The fact that the chosen subject was ἔρως would be irrelevant, or, of anything, of secondary importance. However, if we take ἔρως to be the primary theme in the first part of the *Phaedrus*, and especially if we consider ἔρως to be, from the very start, a modality of μανία and dependent on a specific understanding of φρονεῖν, then the two parts will be, even if not entirely separate, very different in terms of subject and tone. Even if it is unclear in what way the displacement of the normal notion of φρονεῖν, associated with the socially shared perspective, will influence the dialogue after the palinode, it would be very odd if such a massive and radical reappraisal of the status of the normal point of view would not affect the way one interprets how humans communicate, teach and persuade. And that is precisely what happens in the second part of the palinode[8].

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movement or progression, as a series of retrospective and self-referential analyses broaden our awareness of the limitations of what has come before" (*op. cit.* 122). This structure fits not only the relationship between the palinode proper and the previous speeches, but can also be identified throughout the whole dialogue. This peculiar structure and its connection with the Platonic notion of ὑπόθεσις will be further explored in chapter VI of this study. On the possibility that the apparently disjointed nature of the *Phaedrus* is an essential component of what is at stake in the *Phaedrus*, see KASTELY, J., Respecting the Rupture: Not Solving the Problem of Unity in Plato's *Phaedrus*, *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 35 (2002), 138-152. One should note that the different unifying factors are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In the end, what is clear is that the *Phaedrus* seems to resist any straightforward and simple categorisation. The question regarding the unity of the *Phaedrus* remains open.

[8] It is noteworthy that the content of the palinode, in all its oddity and complexity, does not elicit a single question from Phaedrus and is not at any moment a topic of conversation in the second part of the dialogue. Regardless of the reasons for this, the fact is this constitutes a path not taken in the progression of the

Traditional rhetoric, we are told, is based on plausibility, not on truth (260a1ff.; 272d7ff.). In other words, what matters in terms of content is not what actually is, but rather what the intended audience thinks it is. The audience at stake is τὸ πλῆθος, the crowd, the multitude, the majority of people. This means that what one is supposed to care about when making a speech is not the truth, but rather what the majority of people think about it (273b1). In other words, what is important in the case of rhetoric is the socially shared perspective, regardless of it being φρόνιμος or not. This is the kind of rhetoric Phaedrus is familiar with – the kind of rhetoric Lysias and other orators would ordinarily practice. This form of rhetoric does not and ought not to challenge or question the socially shared perspective. It has to adhere to it and, to a certain extent, manipulate it. But one of the consequences of the palinode is that the socially shared perspective, previously deemed to be canonical, becomes detached from φρονεῖν. The socially shared perspective is now deemed to be something quite different from φρονεῖν – at least as different from φρονεῖν as the supposedly mad perspective of someone affected by ἔρως.

The change in the appraisal of μανία and φρονεῖν disqualifies the socially shared perspective from being used as the basis of any form of meaningful communication. By making use of the theses and assumptions that constitute the socially shared perspective, this kind of rhetoric is not only lacking in φρονεῖν, but is also endorsing and perpetuating the situation of lack of φρονεῖν that affects the audience. In these circumstances, true rhetoric has to be based upon knowledge of the truth – a knowledge that, according to the revolutionary and entirely new perspectives introduced in the palinode, is subtracted from most people. The fundamental problem for this true rhetoric will be how to effectively overcome one's normal situation of lack of φρονεῖν, and produce meaningful and truthful speeches. The form of rhetoric proposed by Socrates will be of a philosophical nature (278d3ff.), having as a starting point a critical view of the socially shared perspective as being defective and full of obscurity and confusion – and the awareness of the radically faulty and defective nature of the normal perspective. The new rhetoric will be based on a revised, alternative understanding of φρονεῖν, an understanding that is the product of the world turned upside down that is at the centre of this study. Its role as ψυχαγωγία τις

dialogue. This is the most obvious example of a literary strategy used several times not only in the *Phaedrus*, but also in other Platonic dialogues: suggesting a specific line of inquiry, a specific direction to the conversation for it then to be abandoned for some reason. These detours or interruptions in the course of the dialogue constitute yet another thread within the Platonic dialogues. These leave open a multiplicity of possibilities and introduce an additional level of complexity to an already very complex reality.

διὰ λόγων (261a8) will be to steer the audience away from the daily lack of φρονεῖν they are subjected to and towards the φρονεῖν that can only be achieved through the philosophical project[9].

But the relationship between this new rhetoric and the perspectives introduced in the palinode will have to be more than the simply negative relationship the previous statement has suggested. It is not enough to come up with a rhetoric that accounts for the lack of φρονεῖν of the socially shared perspective. It will also have to account for the positive "innovations" found in the palinode to justify the superlatively beneficial character of erotic μανία. In other words, this new rhetoric will be shaped by its connection with a truth that was before now hidden, and by how it effectively renders the new positive perspective on reality the palinode presents.

But the protagonist role of μανία and its opposite, φρονεῖν, in this dialogue is shown also at an apparently more superficial level, beyond the theses and arguments that constitute the speeches and discussions. It can be seen even in small details throughout the dialogue, small remarks that would remain unnoticed to the distracted reader but that add to a pattern of references to μανία that suggest the undercurrent we have mentioned

[9] The term ψυχαγωγία has connotations that go far beyond simple persuasion. It refers to the practice of raising up the dead through magic and incantation. By extension, or metaphorical use, it came to mean to beguile, to delude or to allure. In its normal usage, ψυχαγωγία therefore seems to congregate two distinct but related ideas: on the one hand, of an alluring and seductive power; on the other hand, of a power that manipulates and deceives. The term would not immediately suggest the kind of rhetoric Socrates has in mind, a rhetoric that leads to the truth, but rather the opposite: a rhetoric that uses the alluring power of language to manipulate and deceive. Ψυχαγωγία's presence in the *Phaedrus* (in the passage quoted above, and also in 271c9) is ambiguous. Even in a context that neutralizes its harmful power, the common meaning of the word still resonates. By using it in association with his peculiar conception of rhetoric, Socrates is transforming its meaning, suggesting that rhetoric is a force that uses its seductive and alluring capabilities to guide one towards the truth, not to deceive. See: MOUTSOPOULOS, E., *La musique dans l'oeuvre de Platon*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1959, 259ff.; ASMIS, E., Psychagogia in Plato's *Phaedrus*, *Illinois Classical Studies* 11 (1986), 153-172; WYLLER, E. A., Plato's concept of rhetoric in the Phaedrus and its tradition in Antiquity, *Symboloe Osloenses* 66 (1991), 51-69; KÉLESSIDOU, A., La psychagogie du Phèdre et le long labeur philosophique, in: ROSSETTI, L. (ed.), *Understanding the Phaedrus*: proceedings of the II Symposium Platonicum, Sankt Augustin, Academia-Verlag, 1992, 265-268; HEITSCH, E., Argumentation und Psychagogie: zu einem Argumentationstrick des Platonischen Sokrates, *Philologus* 138 (1994), 219-234; GELLRICH, M., Socratic Magic: Enchantment, Irony, and Persuasion in Plato's Dialogues, *The Classical World* 87 (1994), 275-307; YUNIS, *op. cit.*, 183. Cf. SEGAL, C., Gorgias and the Power of the Logos, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 66 (1962), 99-155, 149 note 91; MOSS, J. Soul-Leading: The Unity of the *Phaedrus*, Again, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 43 (2012), 1-23, especially 15ff. On the peculiar notion of rhetoric at stake, see ROBIN, *op. cit.*, CXLVIIff.; MORROW, G. R., Plato's conception of persuasion, *Philosophical Review* 62 (1953), 234-250; PLASS, P, *op. cit.*; GRISWOLD, *op. cit.*, 157ff.; MURRAY, J., Disputation, Deception, and Dialectic: Plato on the True Rhetoric (*Phaedrus* 261-266), *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 21 (1988), 279-289; YUNIS, H., Eros in Plato's *Phaedrus* and the Shape of Greek Rhetoric, *Arion* 13 (2005), 101-126; IDEM, Dialectic and the Purpose of Rhetoric in Plato's *Phaedrus*, *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* 24 (2008), 229-248.

before. It can be noticed especially in the language, in what Rutherford calls "verbal texture"[10]. The presence of the gods is felt in this dialogue more strongly than in any other, not necessarily only as the topics of discussion (though they are also discussed at some points), but as passing and fleeting references. Gods populate the spot where most of the dialogue takes place and Socrates goes as far as to attribute divine responsibility to some of his actions and to fear the punishment of a god if he does not make amends. When we consider that μανία was often understood as a form of direct divine intervention, the fact that the presence and actions of the gods are so frequently alluded to becomes significant, something more than just a little pinch of Greekness to make the conversation more palatable. Socrates himself, at several points, talks about losing control over himself or of being at the mercy of divine beings. He has a mad love for speeches, a passion he shares with Phaedrus – and that is what leads him out of the city into the countryside (228b6-c1; 230d6). The speech of Lysias strikes Socrates with amazement and bewilderment: the verb used by Socrates, ἐκπλήττειν (234d1), to describe his condition is the same he will later use in the palinode (250a6, 255b4) to describe the reaction of the fallen soul who has a strong memory of what it has seen in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος when confronted with one of its earthly counterparts[11]. Phaedrus' attitude is described in bacchic terms (234d5), an attitude that Socrates ironically says he is following. In his response to the rhetorical challenge to surpass Lysias, Socrates frames his speech with poetical terms and an invocation of the Muses (237a7ff.). He is not the author of the

[10] RUTHERFORD, R.B., *op. cit.*, 266.

[11] The verb ἐκπλήττειν is more complex than the words bewilderment and amazement might suggest. It was commonly used to denote an intense emotional reaction to something. The specific emotion at stake may vary according to context, and might include joy or pleasure (AESCHYLUS, *Choephoroe* 233; PLATO, *Protagoras* 355b1), fear or terror (AESCHYLUS, *Persae* 606; SOPHOCLES, *Philoctetes* 226; EURIPIDES, *Troiades* 183, GORGIAS, *Helena* 16) and love (EURIPIDES, *Medea* 8; *Hippolytus* 38), as well as amazement (HERODOTUS 1.116; PLATO, *Euthyphro* 6c7). The emotional state is triggered suddenly, out of the blue, and discombobulates the subject. The idea of loss of control seems to be often present. It sometimes describes the situation of being bewildered to the point of paralysis, of being unable to say or do anything (GORGIAS, *Palamedes*, 4.18; PLATO, *Symposium* 194b4, *Gorgias* 494d4), be it out of fear, amazement or mere confusion (PLATO, *Cratylus* 394b2-4). It can also be used to characterise the strong emotional reaction an audience might have before a performance (ARISTOPHANES, *Ranae* 962; PLATO, *Ion* 535b2), or a viewer before something magnificent (PLATO, *Critias* 115d1). See, e.g., SCHMIDT, J., *Synonymik der griechischen Sprache* III, Leipzig, Teubner, 1879, 521; IDEM, *Handbuch der lateinischen und griechischen Synonymik*, Leipzig, Teubner, 1889, 726; JEBB, R. (ed.), *Sophocles The Trachiniae*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1892, ad 629; Page, D. (ed.), *Euripides Medea*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1938, ad 8; SEGAL, *op. cit.*, 126; WORMAN, N., The Body as Argument. Helena in Four Greek Texts, *Classical Antiquity* 16 (1997), 151-172, especially 179-180; TORRES HUERTAS, H., «Los usos de ἔκπαγλος, ἐκπαγλέομαι y ἐκπλήσσω», in: *Τῆς φιλίης τάδε δῶρα. Miscelánea léxica en memoria de Conchita Serrano*, Madrid, CSIC, 1999, 203-209; MASTRONARDE, D. J. (ed.), *Euripides Medea*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, ad 640-1.

speech: all he is about to say has come from alien sources (235c8). The language used is of the chest being filled with the water of poetical inspiration (235c5) – a clear allusion to the aquatic nature of the Muses and the doctrine of poetical inspiration. Midway through his speech, Socrates stops and makes some remarks about his own situation as an orator. He is suffering from a θεῖον πάθος and Phaedrus agrees that he is speaking with a fluency that is out of the ordinary (238c5ff.). Socrates says the place they are at is divine and that he is at risk of being overtaken by the nymphs. Socrates is almost out of control - or so he says he is. At the end of the speech he does not hesitate in saying that he was being possessed by the nymphs, in a state of ἐνθουσιασμός (241e1ff.). At the heart of the speech that corresponds to the most skilful censure of the lack of sobriety and control, the speaker goes out of his way to repeat emphatically that he himself is out of control. All of this happens even before the first spectacular bit of divine intervention – the moment when Socrates' divine sign stops him from going back to the city and makes him compose a retraction – and the flood of references to the gods and the explicit exploration of the role of madness in human life that follows. Even in the second part of the dialogue, after the palinode, there are plenty of references to μανία. These are not limited to the passages that look back at the erotic speeches to review and criticize them (263d1-6; 265a1-c3; 278b6ff.). The myth of the cicadas (258e7-259d8) illustrates the power of the Muses, the cicadas themselves having been the victims of the fulminating power of the pleasure derived from the Muses' songs (259b7-8). And there are at least three passages where the terms belonging to the semantic field of μανία and φρονεῖν can be found: 268c2 (μαίνεται), 273e6 (τὸν σώφρονα) and 274a1 (τὸν νοῦν ἔχοντα).

It is possible that all these elements do not mean a lot – but they might. These elements might have been added just to make the dialogue more interesting, more entertaining, and more complex. But they might also mean something else: they might indicate the presence of a rich and complex perspective or even multiplicity of perspectives on the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition. Regardless of what might be revealed about their importance after a careful analysis of the dialogue, the truth is that, at this preliminary stage it is impossible to dismiss them as irrelevant. But they are and should be treated as pieces of the labyrinthine puzzle that is the *Phaedrus* – a labyrinth we risk getting lost in, but where we might also find some precious clues about the philosophical problem at hand: the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition.

3. Φιλολογία and its role in the *Phaedrus*

3.1. Ambiguities of the notion of φιλολογία in the *Phaedrus*

The importance of rhetoric in the *Phaedrus* is not limited to the lengthy discussion in which Socrates and Phaedrus engage after the palinode. It is present from the very start of the dialogue and serves as the motor of the subsequent discussions. From this point forward, speech-making, its relationship to the truth and its role in human life and society will be at the centre of the dialogue's concerns. Even when these issues are not explicitly being discussed, they are the object of the performative focus of the dialogue. If speeches are not being discussed, they are being read or composed. From a dramatic point of view, a specific speech is the pretext of the whole dialogue. The theme of ἔρως is introduced as the subject matter of a speech by one of the most famous logographers of the time, Lysias. Phaedrus has spent the whole morning listening to this particular speech by Lysias and is now stretching his legs, preparing to exercise his memory by learning it by heart. The fortuitous meeting with Socrates changes Phaedrus' plans. He now intends on using Socrates as an audience, instead of doing it all alone.

The announcement of the subject matter of Lysias' speech, and especially its paradoxical thesis, arouses Socrates' interest, to put it mildly. He is willing to go out of his way – to Megara and back again – to have the pleasure of listening to it. By Socrates' own description, he has an illness for listening to speeches, which makes him the perfect person to share Phaedrus' corybantic frenzy (228b-c). Already at this early stage of the dialogue, we are presented with a form of attachment so strong and bizarre that it can be associated with μανία. Later on in the dialogue, Phaedrus tries to push Socrates into making a speech of his own that might surpass Lysias' (235d4ff.). Faced with his reluctance and his resistance even to the threat of physical violence (236d1ff.), Phaedrus mockingly makes an oath that, if Socrates does not compose his speech, he will never again show or report to him any new speeches (236d9ff.). Socrates emphatically gives up all resistance (236e4-5). He might be able to resist the threat of physical violence, but he cannot stand being deprived of speeches. The playfulness of this whole exchange should not make us lose track of the important points being made. Socrates might be overreacting and exaggerating, and Phaedrus might be pretending to be even more eager than he is to

listen to the new speech, but the fact remains that both characters reveal a bit about their nature and, especially, their relationship to rhetoric, in this passage.

The fact that Socrates describes himself as φιλόλογος gives us a hint about the nature of the disease he mentioned at the beginning of the dialogue (236e5). Socrates suffers from φιλολογία. By this he obviously does not mean philology in the modern sense of the word. Φιλολογία is a form of attachment. But it is not a form of the mild, peaceful attachment we usually tend to associate with φιλία, especially when, on its own, the word is rendered as "friendship". The prefix φιλο- can be used to denote an obsessive form of attachment, an addiction to something.

We find examples of this use of the prefix φιλο- elsewhere in the *corpus platonicum*, namely *Republic* V (474d1ff.). In this passage, we find the figures of the φιλόπαις (474d5), the φίλοινος (475a5), the φιλότιμος (475a9), the φιλομαθής (475c1), the φιλόσοφος (475c1), the φιλόσιτος (475c4), the φιλοθεάμων (475d2) and the φιλήκοος (475d3). These are presented as examples of persons overcome by a specific form of strong, overwhelming attachment to a specific object, or, to be more precise, class of objects. This precision is necessary since what is at stake in this passage of *Republic* is a kind of attachment that is not only strongly drawn towards something, but that also does not distinguish between different objects of the same type. One is therefore drawn towards of the class of objects as a whole, even if one cannot enjoy but one or a few objects at a time. So the φιλόπαις will enjoy and pursue any kind of boy, regardless of his specific physical characteristics, because he is attached not to a specific παῖς, but rather, so to speak, to all the παίδες in the world. It is an undifferentiating kind of obsession. But this is also an obsession that is not satisfied with the enjoyment of only one exemplar of the class it is drawn to. It is therefore not only undifferentiating; it is also characterised by a tension towards enjoying each and every single object of the class it is drawn to. It is not just that *anything* goes (within the bounds of the specific class of objects one is drawn to), but also that *everything* goes, as far as possible. An attachment with these characteristics will play a dominant role in one's life, constituting what in modern terms is designated as an addiction.

However, this specific usage of the prefix φιλο- is not a Platonic or even philosophical quirk. It can be found in a literary work, which, being a comedy, would be potentially seen and understood by everyone: Aristophanes' *Vespae*. At the beginning of

this comedy, two slaves discuss the strange disease that affects their master's father, Philocleon (64ff.). The illness at stake is some kind of addictive behaviour, and several options are put forward: φιλόκυβος (75), φιλοπότης (79), φιλοθύτης (82), φιλόξενος (82). From the context, i.e., from the fact that the slaves are looking for the νόσος that is affecting Philocleon, it is clear that neither of these terms designates a simple fondness or mere enjoyment of the activities denoted by each of them. A φιλόκυβος would not be someone who just moderately enjoys playing dice once in a while, but rather what we would call a gambling addict. A φιλοπότης would be more than just someone who does not say no to a drink every now and again: he would be an alcoholic. The fact that the two other φιλο- do not seem to correspond to anything we would nowadays recognise as an addiction and, φιλόξενος especially, seem to be more of a joke than anything else, suggests that Aristophanes is playing with this specific meaning of the prefix by using it in absurd contexts, referring to absurd situations. The most absurd of all, in fact, is the addiction or νόσος Philocleon actually suffers from. Philocleon is a φιληλιαστής (88). He is not someone who is merely keen on being a member of the jury in the Heliaea court; he is obsessed with it, he is addicted to it, he cannot live without it, to the point of it becoming a νόσος. His case is so severe that it is, in effect, incurable. The most Philocleon's son can achieve is to find a way of keeping his father's behaviour in check by channelling his addiction towards a domestic mock court. Judging by the outcome of the play, this is a νόσος that never goes away, but that can at least to a certain extent be controlled. The prefix φιλο- can have this specific semantic charge: addictive obsession. It is noteworthy, in fact, that it is Aristophanes himself that isolates the prefix φιλο- (77), thereby showing that, in specific contexts, the prefix itself could be understood as denoting the kind of overwhelming, obsessive and voracious attachment we have been talking about. By calling himself a φιλόλογος, Socrates is suggesting that he cannot live without λόγοι, that he suffers from a disease that makes him obsessively look for them[12].

[12] On words composed with the φίλο- prefix and their meaning, see: DIRLMEIER, F. *ΦΙΛΟΣ und ΦΙΛΙΑ in vorhellenistischen Griechtum*, München, Druck der Salesianischen Offizin, 1931; CLASSEN, C. J., *Sprachliche Deutung als Triebkraft platonischen und sokratischen Philosophierens*, München, Beck, 1959, 148ff.; BURKERT, W., Platon und Pythagora? Zum Ursprung des Wortes "Philosophie", *Hermes* 88 (1960), 159-177, especially 172ff.; CHROUST, A., Some Reflections on the Origin of the Term "Philosopher", *New Scholasticism* 28 (1964), 423-434; LANDFESTER, W., *Das griechische Nomen ΦΙΛΟΣ und seine Ableitungen*, Hildsheim, Olms, 1966; MACDOWELL, D (ed.), *Aristophanes Wasps*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971, ad 77; FRAISSE, J.-C., *Philia:* la notion d'amitié dans la philosophie antique; essai sur un problème perdu et retrouvé, Paris, Vrin, 1974, 35ff.; SIDER, D., Aristophanes Wasps 74ff. The Missing Vice, *Classical Philology* 70 (1975), 125-126; SCHADEWALDT, W., *Die Anfänge der Philosophie bei den Griechen*. Die Vorsokratiker und ihre Voraussetzungen, Tübinger Vorlesungen 1.

In a way, this is a disease that Phaedrus also shares. From the very start, he is characterised as someone who is very keen on rhetoric and its products. He spent the whole morning listening to Lysias' speech; not happy with that, he took with him a copy of the speech to read and memorise; meeting Socrates, he tries to exercise his ability to reproduce the speech, only to be thwarted by Socrates' preference for listening to Lysias' speech itself, not to a paraphrase. His excitement for Lysias' speech seems genuine: he is delighted by it, to the point of Socrates (ironically) saying that he was caught by Phaedrus' bacchic excitement (234d). When faced with the possibility of listening to another speech, Phaedrus eagerly seizes it and forces Socrates to pronounce it. When Socrates, alerted by the divine sign, states that another speech is needed, a retraction from what has been said earlier, Phaedrus is absolutely delighted (243b8). He is now in a very pleasant situation: he had to fight for Socrates' first speech, but now there is a second one coming, all of a sudden, without him expecting it. Furthermore, since it inverts the basic thesis of the previous speeches, since this speech will be a praise of ἔρως, there is now room for a renewed rhetorical challenge. Lysias will have to produce his own praise, in reply to Socrates'. Phaedrus' love for λόγοι will be thoroughly satisfied by a back and forth of speeches. This is congruent with Socrates' characterisation of Phaedrus as being responsible for the production of many speeches, either of his own authorship, or by making others produce them (242a-b). He seems to live to listen to, learn and discuss λόγοι. The way they both love λόγοι, however, is described in terms that are usually used to describe madness-related events. The references to disease, the Corybants and Bacchus all point towards a similarity between the stated φιλολογία, or, to be more exact, φιλολογίαι, and μανία. As we have seen, there are precedents for this assimilation between obsessive attachment and μανία. Such is the nature of Philocleon's disease in

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Frankfurt a. M., Suhrkamp, 1978, 12ff.; IDEM, *Die Anfänge der Geschichtsschreibung bei den Griechen*, Tübinger Vorlesungen 2. Franfurt a. M., Suhrkamp, 1982, 187; GILULA, D., Four Deadly Sins? (Arist. Wasps 74-84), *Classical Quarterly* 33 (1983), 358-362; SOMMERSTEIN, A. H. (ed.), *Wasps* (The Comedies of Aristophanes 4), Warminster, Aris & Phillips, 1984, ad 77, 79, 82; CIPRIANO, P., *I compost greci con ΦΙΛΟΣ*, Viterbo, Università della Tuscia, Istituto di Studi Romanzi, 1990, 38ff., 98-106; HEITSCH, E., Zwei Bemerkungen zu Platons Phaidros (Hestia und der Zwölfgötterkreis. ἔρως als φιλο-σοφία), in: MOST, G. W., et al. (eds.), *Philanthropia kai eusebeia*. Festschrift für A. Dihle, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993, 174-182, especially 178ff.; HEITSCH, E. (ed.), *Platon Phaidros*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993, 33 note 28, 65 note 73, 80 note 110, 129-130, 245; MACDOWELL, D, Nikostratos, *Classical Quarterly* 15 (1996), 41-51, especially 48-49; DAVIDSON, J. N., *Courtesans and Fishcakes*. The Consuming Passions of Classical Athens, N. Y., St. Martin's Press, 1998, 159ff.; WILLI, A., *The Languages of Aristophanes*. Aspects of Linguistic Variation in Classical Attic Greek, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, 67; CARVALHO, M. J., *Die Aristophanesrede in Platons* Symposium. Die Verfassung des Selbst, Würzburg, Königshausen & Neumann, 2009, 299-301 note 191.

Aristophanes *Vespae*: he desires being part of a jury obsessively, he cannot live without it. Even if we consider these descriptions in the *Phaedrus* as being hyperbolic and a bit ironic, the fact remains that the principal dramatic motor of the whole dialogue, the φιλολογία of the interlocutors, is explicitly associated with μανία-like phenomena, putting this notion at the forefront of the dialogue's concerns and creating the paradox, which will later be explored at length, of knowledge acquired through mad impulse.

Socrates' and Phaedrus' shared φιλολογία is the motor of the dialogue. It is because they obsessively love speeches that they decide to go outside the city and dedicate their day to listening and discussing Lysias speech; it is this shared love that leads Phaedrus to threaten Socrates with deprivation from speeches and Socrates to cave to that threat. But, if we look closely, the φιλολογία of Phaedrus differs from the one Socrates exhibits in such a way as to make it virtually impossible to identify one with the other. Φιλολογία will mean different things to the different characters.

In order to understand the nature of this difference, it may be useful to look at another text of the *corpus platonicum* that introduces an analogous division in kinds within a same phenomenon. In spite of the differences in context, Pausanias' speech in the *Symposium* can be a helpful instrument to understand in what way Socrates' and Phaedrus' respective φιλολογίαι are radically different. Pausanias' speech introduces a model that that may, *mutatis mutandis*, allow us to understand this possibility. The phenomenon at stake in Pausanias' speech is ἔρως. Pausanias, however, does not praise ἔρως ἁπλῶς (180c3), but rather introduces an element of complexity: ἔρως is not simple, but double. In Pausanias' speech, ἔρως is understood as a phenomenon characterised by a certain degree of internal complexity, and it is this internal complexity that allows the differentiation between two kinds of ἔρως: πάνδημος and οὐράνιος. Pausanias introduces a variety of criteria to distinguish between the two kinds of ἔρως. They differ in what regards the nature of the object. Ἔρως πάνδημος is presented as a form of undifferentiated erotic attachment – anything goes. Ἔρως οὐράνιος, on the other hand, is picky and is only attracted to the male sex (181b1ff.). These two kinds of ἔρως are also distinguished in their temporal horizon. Ἔρως πάνδημος is unstable and fickle; it does not linger in the same person for long. Ἔρως οὐράνιος has a longer temporal horizon: it remains fixed in the same person. Finally, they differ in their end or purpose. Ἔρως πάνδημος will only want the pleasure that is to be derived from sexual gratification. Ἔρως οὐράνιος, on the other hand, aims at φιλοσοφία and ἀρετή.

The φιλολογίαι of Socrates and Phaedrus differ in roughly the same aspects as the two types of ἔρως identified by Pausanias: they differ in nature, temporal horizon and end or purpose. A precious hint to understand in what respect they differ is given to us by Socrates in 230d3ff. Phaedrus and Socrates finally reach the place they were headed for. Socrates is absolutely stunned by the beauty of the spot and voices his admiration effusively. Phaedrus is amazed by Socrates' reaction and interprets it as being similar to the reaction of a foreigner before a sight that he has never seen before. But Socrates is an Athenian and so should be familiar with the sight. But Socrates is also a strange Athenian, an Athenian that lives in the city and never leaves it – unlike most[13]. Socrates explains why he never leaves the city: he is a φιλομαθής, and he learns, not from trees, but from other human beings. Socrates' φιλολογία cannot be understood without his φιλομαθία[14]. Socrates is the model of the φιλόσοφος: he yearns for knowledge. This introduces an important criterion into the choice of which speeches merit Socrates' φιλολογία. He loves speeches, but he loves them because he can learn from them: that is the end or purpose of his φιλολογία. Socrates' φιλολογία will not, therefore, be directed towards any kind of speech whatsoever: it rather yearns for speeches of superior quality, for the λόγοι that can help him satisfy his thirst for knowledge. In his pursuit of this kind of speeches, Socrates will remain steadfast. When he finds speeches from which he can learn, he remains committed to them, until they are proven to be unworthy of his φιλολογία. Socrates' φιλολογία, therefore, is a form of φιλολογία οὐρανία, so to speak. Phaedrus' φιλολογία, on the other hand, is clearly of the πανδήμος variety. Phaedrus does not seem to be worried with the truthfulness of the speech, or, at least, that is for him a rather secondary concern. He judges speeches according to different criteria. He enjoys the wordplay, the

[13] GRISWOLD (*op. cit.*, 34-35) does not believe in the factual truth of the statement that Socrates does not know the countryside around Athens. Socrates' familiarity with the various spots they have walked through is evident, e.g., by his knowledge of the geographical details of the abduction of Oreithuia.

[14] In the *corpus Platonicum*, the term φιλομαθία and its cognates are often associated with the term φιλοσοφία and its cognates. This association is in many instances one of synonymy, with φιλομαθία and φιλοσοφία used as mutually replaceable terms. See *Phaedo* 66b2: "τοῖς γνησίως φιλοσόφοις", which is synonymous with "τοὺς ὀρθῶς φιλομαθεῖς" (67b5); 82c1ff.; 82d9; 83a1: "γιγνώσκουσιν οἱ φιλομαθεῖς ὅτι οὕτω παραλαβοῦσα ἡ φιλοσοφία ἔχουσαν αὐτῶν τὴν ψυχὴν ἠρέμα παραμυθεῖται καὶ λύειν ἐπιχειρεῖ κτλ."; *Republic* 376b5: "ἀλλὰ μέντοι, εἶπον ἐγώ, τό γε φιλομαθὲς καὶ φιλόσοφον ταὐτόν;"; 376b8ff.: "οὐκοῦν θαρροῦντες τιθῶμεν καὶ ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ, εἰ μέλλει πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους καὶ γνωρίμους πρᾷός τις ἔσεσθαι, φύσει φιλόσοφον καὶ φιλομαθῆ αὐτὸν δεῖν εἶναι;"; 411d1: "οὐκ εἴ τι καὶ ἐνῆν αὐτοῦ φιλομαθὲς ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ κτλ.", synonymous with 411e5: "καὶ τὸ φιλόσοφον"; 485d3: "τὸν ἄρα τῷ ὄντι φιλομαθῆ πάσης ἀληθείας δεῖ εὐθὺς ἐκ νέου ὅτι μάλιστα ὀρέγεσθαι."; 490a2: "μετεῖναι φιλοσοφίας ἀληθινῆς", synonymous with 490a9: "ὅ γε ὄντως φιλομαθής"; 499e2: "ἐὰν αὐτοῖς μὴ φιλονικῶν ἀλλὰ παραμυθούμενος καὶ ἀπολυόμενος τὴν τῆς φιλομαθείας διαβολὴν ἐνδεικνύῃ οὓς λέγεις τοὺς φιλοσόφους"; 581d9ff.: "τὸν δὲ φιλόσοφον, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, τί οἰώμεθα τὰς ἄλλας ἡδονὰς νομίζειν πρὸς τὴν τοῦ εἰδέναι τἀληθὲς ὅπῃ ἔχει καὶ ἐν τοιούτῳ τινὶ ἀεὶ εἶναι μανθάνοντα;". See STALLBAUM, G. (ed.), *Platonis Phaedo*, London, Priestley, 1833, ad 82d7ff.

structure, the novelty and outlandishness of the theses. In short, he enjoys speeches as playful displays of rhetorical skill, not as instruments for the acquisition of knowledge. Any speech that can provide him with this kind of pleasure will be welcome. That means that Phaedrus' φιλολογία will be as fickle as it is obsessive: he will pursue any speech that might provide him with the kind of pleasure he seeks, never remaining for long with the same. The eponymous dialogue is a testament to that: Phaedrus enthusiastically receives three speeches on the same subject that differ radically in tone, structure and even in content. Socrates' is obsessively attached to speeches because he is obsessively attached to the truth; Phaedrus, on the other hand, uses speeches as objects for his own personal enjoyment. The thing they love is only apparently the same.

These two different kinds of φιλολογία show us two different ways of relating to λόγοι. This, however, does not mean necessarily that there is any substantial objective difference regarding the object of φιλία. Both kinds of φιλολογία might be drawn towards the same λόγοι. But the difference in motivation and purpose accounts for a radically different approach. Not only that, but this radical difference in approach will be concomitant with a radically different recognition and understanding of the object as such. The same exact speech will be, in correlation with the different kinds of φιλολογία, identified differently. There is a substantial difference between reading a speech as a simple means of entertainment and pleasure, and reading it as an occasion for learning and acquiring knowledge. For the latter, aspects like presentation and the specific language used will be of secondary importance. They will be important only inasmuch as they contribute to the comprehension of what can be learned from the speech. For the former, however, these aspects are absolutely essential. They become the primary concern, the criterion that distinguishes a good from a bad speech. Even the most profound and didactic of speeches can be read as a mere trifle, as the occasion for delighting in verbal games and in rhetorical prowess. And even the most apparently inane speech may merit a reading oriented towards extracting from it as most significant content as possible.

4. Epideictic character of the speeches of the *Phaedrus*

4.1. The tradition of epideictic speech and its meaning: the peculiar nature of its truth claim

We have mentioned the centrality of rhetoric in the *Phaedrus*. But it is important to take notice that the type of rhetoric of which we have examples in this dialogue is very specific. The erotic speeches are not forensic or political speeches. They are not composed in order to convince a jury or the assembly of the fairness of one's claims. They, apparently, have no practical purpose, no place in real life. The speeches presented in the dialogue belong the genre of epideictic rhetoric. They are, in a way, "just for show". These rhetorical exercises have a very rich tradition amongst the Greek orators, a tradition that was probably introduced by Gorgias and found eager followers in Isocrates, Demosthenes and, of course, Lysias, among others. As showpieces of rhetorical prowess, their function was to show their author's rhetorical and argumentative ability. There was, of course, as was usual in Greek culture, an important competitive component to this tradition: each orator tried to emulate and surpass others with his skills, and trying to defend a difficult thesis was the perfect way for the orator to present himself as a virtuoso of words and arguments. The subject matter was of little consequence, as the author's aim was to convince neither a jury to condemn or acquit a defendant nor the people to vote for or against a legislative proposal. All he wanted was to be better than all his competitors and to impress his audience or readers. Certainly there were, in some cases, some economic benefits: an orator's ability could be judged not only by the success of his speeches in court, but also by his masterful handling of words, arguments and τόποι. The logographer or teacher of rhetoric known as the most skilful would likely have many more clients or students – indeed, if one is shopping around for a logographer or a teacher of rhetoric, one would probably choose the one who had shown the greater ability in defending the most difficult thesis. The production of this kind of speeches would reflect well on its author's rhetorical ability. Furthermore, composing speeches of little practical consequence could be used as a tool in one's rhetorical education. Regardless of the purpose and subject matter of the speech, one can use the techniques one has learnt and therefore practice one's rhetorical abilities. But writing an epideictic speech was not just a good way to beat competition, publicizing or practicing one's rhetorical skills: it was

also a very amusing game. Playing around with arguments and words would amuse not only the author, but also the audience, as, in fact, is the case of Phaedrus.

The speeches of the *Phaedrus* are part of this important rhetorical tradition. More specifically, they are part of a subgenre of epideictic rhetoric: the paradoxical ἐγκώμιον or ψόγος[15]. This corresponds to a variation of the traditional genres of the ἐγκώμιον and ψόγος, respectively praise and blame of what is widely believed to be praiseworthy and blameworthy. By praising what deserves praise and blaming what deserves to be blamed, the speaker will be encouraging his audience towards virtue and away from wicked behaviours. The paradoxical ἐγκώμιον and ψόγος are also speeches praising and blaming something – but with a twist. A paradoxical ἐγκώμιον will praise something that is either usually the object of blame, or is so insignificant and unimportant as to be considered undeserving of praise. A paradoxical ψόγος will do the opposite[16]. Of course, the point of praising something that does not deserve praise and of blaming what does not deserve blame is not to steer the audience away from virtue and towards wickedness. It is rather to dazzle the audience with the speaker's rhetorical prowess in defending theses that most of them would find absurd. By choosing to defend an absurd thesis, the speaker is setting a very difficult challenge for himself, a challenge that, if successfully met, will signal how proficient, skilful and worthy of admiration he is as an orator.

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[15] On the tradition of epideictic rhetoric in Ancient Greece, see BURGESS, T., *Epideictic Literature*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1902; PEASE, A., Things Without Honor, *Classical Philology* 21 (1926), 27-42 (focusing especially on the paradoxical ἐγκώμιον); BLUMENTHAL, A. von, Παίγνιον, in WISSOWA, G. (ed.), *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumwissenschaft* 18, 2., Stuttgart, Metzler, 1942, 2396-2398; BUCHHEIT V., *Untersuchungen zur Theorie des Genos Epideiktikon von Gorgias bis Aristoteles*, Munich, Max Hueber Verlag, 1960; CHASE, J. R., The Classical Conception of Epideictic, *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 47 (1961), 293-300; JEBB, R. C., *The Attic Orators from Antiphon to Isaeos*, New York, Russell & Russell, 1962, II, 93ff., 103f.; KENNEDY, G. *The Art of Persuasion in Greece*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1963, 152ff., especially 167ff.; MARTIN, J., *Antike Rhetorik*. Technik und Methode, München, Beck, 1974, 177ff., 202f.; GLADIGOW, B., "Das Paradox macht Sinn". Sinnkonstitution durch Paradoxien in der grieschichen Antike, in GEYER, P., HAGENBÜCHLE, R. (ed.), *Das Paradox*: eine Herausforderung des abendländischen Denkens, Tübingen, Stauffenburg Verlag, 1992, 195-208; PERNOT, L., *La rhétorique de l'éloge dans le monde gréco-romain*, Paris, Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1993, 20f., 532ff.; HEITSCH, E. (ed.), *Platon Phaidros*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993, 79f.; NIGHTINGALE, A., The folly of praise, Plato's critique of encomiastic discourse in the Lysis and Symposium, *Classical Quarterly* 43 (1993), 112-130; NIGHTINGALE; A., *Genres in Dialogue*: Plato and the Construct of Philosophy, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, 100f.; GAGARIN, M., Did the Sophists Aim to Persuade?, *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 19 (2001), 275-291; PERI, A., Teoria e prassi degli enkomia adoxa, in CRISTANTE, L. (ed.), *Incontri triestini di filologia classica* 1: 2001-2002, Trieste, Ed. Università di Trieste, 2003, 25-34.

[16] On the scarcity of sources suggesting the existence of epideictic ψόγοι, paradoxical or not, see BUCHHEIT, *op. cit.*, 127; ROUNTREE, C., The (Almost) Blameless Genre of Classical Greek Epideictic, *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 19 (2001), 293-305.

Though a mere display piece, a paradoxical epideictic speech is still a speech. And this means one of its aims must be to produce a certain kind of persuasion. Naturally, this persuasion is not of the same kind one can find in, for example, forensic oratory, where the orator was truly aiming at bringing the jury to his side. The aim of the orator is not to convince the audience to act in a specific way, or to convince them of the truth of a specific thesis. Rather, what the orator wants to do is to convince the audience of his own superior abilities as an orator. In the epideictic genre, the orator wants solely to impress whoever reads or listens to his speech with his skill. But how impressive could an absurd speech be? The fact is that even a paradoxical epideictic speech needs to be plausible: without plausibility it is in danger of being dismissed as an absurdity. This is the fine line the author must thread: he is forced by his subject matter to argue for something absurd, but he must do it in an as plausible and persuasive way as possible. By choosing to face such a difficult challenge, the author of a paradoxical ἐγκώμιον or ψόγος has to deal with the substantial risk of becoming entirely unconvincing, i.e., of having his speech dismissed by the audience as absurd. For such a speech to be effective, it has to find a way of turning the initially absurd nature of the subject into something with at least a semblance of plausibility. But he has to do it in such a way as not to completely dismiss the paradoxical nature of the subject – since it is this paradoxical nature that turns this rhetorical exercise worthy of the skills of an admirable orator. In the end, the effect has to be such that the audience, even though aware of the absurd nature of the thesis being put forward by the orator, is unable to pull it apart and dismiss it.

Paradoxical epideictic rhetoric is therefore an intrinsically ambiguous activity. If one is to write a paradoxical ἐγκώμιον or ψόγος, one must put forth arguments as plausible and believable as possible. But how is this to be done? In the same way it is done in other genres of oratory: by using the theses our audience is more likely to believe in, and these are, in almost every case, the theses it already holds. In other words, truth – or what the audience holds to be true – cannot be dismissed as entirely irrelevant. The outlandish arguments put forward by this kind of rhetoric are paradoxical because they go against the beliefs held by the audience; this being so, these arguments will point out and reveal by contrast what those beliefs are. Truth, or at least truth as the audience knows it, will be the standard even of paradoxical epideictic rhetoric – though in a very complex way.

The complexity of the relationship between rhetoric and the truth is illustrated by Socrates later in the dialogue, when he explains how, according to Tisias, the brave little

robber would defend himself against his strong but cowardly victim: "πῶς δ’ ἂν ἐγὼ τοιόσδε τοιῷδε ἐπεχείρησα;" (273b3ff.). With no further evidence, a jury would be naturally inclined to absolve, since no one would believe the smaller man could overpower the larger one. Tisias suggests that the orator uses beliefs commonly held by the intended audience to produce the impression of plausibility. The audience, of course, could not possibly have seen the events the orator is referring to, but the orator, skilfully manipulating their beliefs, can produce the impression of them actually being there, of actually knowing what happened. In other words, if our aim is to persuade, it is better to assert a plausible falsity than an implausible truth, because, from the point of view of the audience, a plausible falsity will be closer to the truth.

Therefore, if we are to produce a speech like the ones we find in the *Phaedrus*, we would have to firmly root our arguments in the commonly held beliefs on love, madness and sanity. We would have to say something with at least a little semblance of meaning and persuasive power about these matters. But, in order for it to have any persuasive power, the arguments will have to refer back to the commonly held beliefs – held because thought to be truthful – of the audience. The orator will employ parts of the set of commonly held beliefs to sustain his arguments. The lack of real practical purpose of the speech, however, gives the epideictic author a greater freedom to choose his arguments and theses. He is not bound by plausibility in the same way other kinds of rhetoric are. The orator will be able to somehow rearrange the multiplicity of commonly held beliefs in such a way as to support his thesis. He can play with the beliefs of his audience, twist them in amusing and surprising ways. These twists and turns will reflect the beliefs held by the audience in several ways. They can reflect them by being used as the basis of the argument, at least in part. But they can reflect them also by contrast, as the theses that are being refuted or turned upside down by the paradoxical epideictic speech. A paradoxical epideictic speech does not claim to tell the truth in the same way other kinds of speech do, but it still relates to it. The paradoxical nature of the speech is created by using what is not paradoxical: the commonly held beliefs of the audience. By turning certain commonly held beliefs upside down, the author of paradoxical epideictic speeches is creating an alternative perspective on those beliefs, a perspective that is capable of challenging them, even if just in jest. It is creating a counter-truth, at least in the rhetorical situation created by the display of his rhetorical ability. This, as we have seen before,

illustrates at the same time those same commonly held beliefs that are now being overturned by the paradoxical epideictic speech.

Other kinds of speech, even when they just take into account the plausibility of the arguments, have to convince the audience that what is being said is actually true. The speech that convinces the jury might be clever and well-crafted, but it will convince the jury because it will seem to be telling the truth – more so than the opposing speech. Rhetorical ability will be an instrument at the service of creating plausibility, of persuading the audience. In the case of epideictic speeches, the rhetorical ability is much more important, because what the author actually wants to persuade the audience of is of his own ability as an author.

4.2. Epideictic character of Lysias' speech and Socrates' first speech

The complex relationship with the truth that characterises the epideictic genre, and especially the subgenre of the paradoxical ἐγκώμιον and ψόγος, can be seen in Lysias' speech, as well as in Socrates' first speech. Lysias speech is a perfect example of paradoxical ἐγκώμιον and ψόγος. It is, in fact, both and ἐγκώμιον and a ψόγος: the ψόγος of the lover and the ἐγκώμιον of the non-lover. It presents the non-lover in the most positive terms, while, at the same time, censuring and blaming the lover. Socrates' first speech, while omitting the ἐγκώμιον of the non-lover, nevertheless presents a powerful ψόγος of the lover.

From the point of view of our culture, which attributes a high value to love as an essential component of happiness, the paradoxical aspect of Lysias speech, and of Socrates' first speech as well, resides in the conflict between what we think we know that love is, and the way love is portrayed. We know that love is a fundamentally positive force; we know that it brings meaning and joy to people's lives; we know that falling in love is a beautiful and desirable event. Therefore, a speech that, like Lysias' and Socrates' first speech, argues that being in love is actually the source of unhappiness and misery, a speech that praises the absence of love as the most expedient and wise way to go about having an intimate relationship with someone, will be seen as paradoxical to its core. This understanding of the paradoxical nature of these two speeches, however, ignores some fundamental differences between our understanding of this phenomenon and the most common perspective held by ancient Greek culture on the nature of ἔρως and its role in

human life. A subsequent chapter will provide a more detailed account of this, but at this moment it is important to bear in mind that the mainstream ancient Greek views on love differ substantially from our own. And probably the most significant and surprising difference lies in the fact that this is not a culture that valued love as an essential component of happiness, but rather the opposite: as a significant disruption of the normal course of life and the potential cause of ruin and misery. In addition to this, being under the effect of ἔρως is commonly understood as a form of slavery, of being dominated by an overwhelming superior force. This makes being in love incompatible with the dignity associated with being a citizen. Being in love is a situation that is in many ways opposed to the ideal of self-control that is associated with being a free man. Falling in love is therefore a generally undesirable event in one's life. It is not something one dreams of, and even less something one admires in others. Someone who has not been affected by this will not lament the fact, and envy those who have. Rather the opposite: he will most likely think himself lucky and, if not despise, at least pity those who have had the misfortune of having fallen in love.

This being the case, it would seem that there was nothing paradoxical about Lysias' speech and Socrates' first speech, and that, on the contrary, they were completely in tune with what their prospective audiences would hold as true. However, the conditions for the production of the paradoxical effect of the speeches are more complex than this. At one level, Lysias' speech – and, by extension, Socrates' first speech – are paradoxical because they go against the conventions of the genre they belong to. These speeches are ἐρωτικοί λόγοι[17]. They are speeches on love, and, to be more precise, wooing speeches: speeches directed at an ἐρώμενος, with the intention of convincing him to yield to the speaker's advances. This is a genre that has its own rules and conventions, dictated by the specific subject matter and by the conditions in which these speeches have to be produced and delivered. The speaker is someone in love with the boy, an ἐραστής, or someone who at least declares to be in love, even if he is motivated mainly by sexual desire. His

[17] This is a peculiar epideictic genre that was cultivated by, amongst others, Antisthenes, Simmias of Thebes, Xenophon and Aristotle himself. A particularly noteworthy example of this genre is the *Erotikos* of Pseudo-Demosthenes. But perhaps the most famous examples of ἐρωτικοὶ λόγοι can be found in the Plato's *Symposium*. On the long-lived tradition of the ἐρωτικοὶ λόγοι, see ARISTOTLE, *Politics* 1262b11ff.; LASSERRE, F., Ἐρωτικοὶ λόγοι, *Museum Helveticum* 1 (1944), 169-178; RITORE PONCE, J., El Amor en la Oratoria Griega, in: BRIOSO SÁNCHEZ, M. and VILLARRUBIA MEDINA, A. (eds.), *Consideraciones en torno al amor en la literatura de la Grecia Antigua*, Sevilla, Universidad de Sevilla, 2000, 101-122, especially 106-111; VELÁSQUEZ, O. (ed.), *Platón:* El Banquete *o siete discursos sobre el amor*, Santiago de Chile, Editorial Universitária, 2002, 30ff..

motivation for producing the speech, for trying to persuade the boy, is the fact that he is in love, or otherwise attracted to the boy. Regardless of the motivation, it is an essential part of the conventions of the wooing speech that the author declares his love for the addressee. This declaration of love might be sincere or simply instrumental, but it is nonetheless of fundamental importance. For someone in love to convince someone who, by the conventions of ancient παιδεραστία, would never be considered to be in love himself to yield to his advances requires a substantial amount of persuasion. The boy has to be convinced of the merits of deciding to accept the ἐραστής' advances. This becomes even more difficult in the context of a culture that is hostile to the idea of falling in love and that sees lovers as disturbed people, even in the grips of madness. Therefore, the ἐραστής has to persuade the boy of the value that having someone that is love with him would bring to his life. For that purpose, he will have to portray himself as being the bearer of significant benefits for the boy, as well as, in general, someone worthy of the boy's attention and affection. By its very nature, a wooing speech will have to be a ἐγκώμιον of love and the lover – as well as of the boy himself, as part of using flattery not only to soften the boy's resistance, but also to justify the ἐραστής' strange condition on the basis of ἐρώμενος' many qualities. To praise love and present it as the bearer of benefits for all involved was a conventional feature of pederastic wooing speeches.

But Lysias' and Socrates' first speech do something completely different. These are ἐρωτικοί λόγοι that, in complete opposition to the conventional features of their own genre, go about blaming love. They keep the intention of wooing, to persuade the boy to yield, but they do it not from the perspective of someone who is in love, but from the perspective of someone who is not. And that is the most surprising aspect of these speeches, at first. These are wooing speeches produced by people who the audience would never imagine would be making wooing speeches. There is a contradiction between the character of the speaker and the purpose of this specific genre of rhetoric. This is a perspective that is completely out of place when making use of this type of rhetoric. An anti-erotic message in an erotic speech is a caricature of itself, a comical distortion of the self-proclaimed sobriety and self-control the non-lover champions. But not only that: the speakers are not people who are not in love pretending that they are in love, producing a "normal" wooing speech. What is at stake here is not a mere pretend wooing. Rather, they are wooing the boy by arguing against love – which is the complete opposite of what the normal wooing speech would be. In the case of Socrates' first speech, the speaker is a

pretended non-lover: he is strategically hiding his true condition, but he is clearly motivated by ἔρως (237b2ff.). He is using this devious device and arguing against ἔρως to seduce and attract the boy. But nothing of the sort is suggested in Lysias' speech. There we find a supposedly "real" non-lover wooing a boy, and using arguments against ἔρως and lovers to persuade the boy to choose him.

But there is another level at which these speeches are paradoxical. The "normal" wooing speeches, i.e., the ones that argue for ἔρως, are more than just a conventional rhetorical genre. They are the bearers of a specific perspective on this phenomenon. This perspective differs significantly from the mainstream negative view of ἔρως, insofar as the latter finds ἔρως to be a potentially positive and beneficial force in one's life, at least under specific circumstances. The audience of Lysias' and Socrates' first speech, represented by Phaedrus, would be familiar with the conventions and views of παιδεραστία and would recognise παιδεραστία as an influential alternative perspective on the nature of ἔρως and its role in human life. Even if this positive perspective is not endorsed by most, it was known by most as the perspective that produces the genre of speeches similar to the ones we find in the *Phaedrus*.

In short, both Lysias' speech and Socrates' first speech (and, we shall see, Socrates' second speech too) establish a dialogue with both the mainstream views on ἔρως and the alternative represented by παιδεραστία. Lysias' and Socrates' first speech use the means employed by παιδεραστία to express views completely opposed to παιδεραστία – with the purpose of achieving what παιδεραστία wants: to seduce the boy. In this cultural context, the content of these speeches would be readily recognised as paradoxical. And this paradoxical character would be reinforced and made absolutely evident by the use of a rhetorical genre intrinsically associated with παιδεραστία. These epideictic speeches are in an awkward position in relation to both the negative and the positive views of ἔρως. On the one hand, these speeches make use of the negative views on ἔρως – but they do it in the context of a literary genre that demands the exact opposite. On the other hand, the speeches illustrate an existential situation, wooing an ἐρώμενος, where praising ἔρως would be expected and, perhaps, the most effective way of achieving the proposed end. The literary genre would be an expression of this situation, a situation that uses love as a way of achieving the intended aim of persuading the ἐρώμενος to yield to the ἐραστής' advances. In doing this, it contrasts with both the traditional speech praising ἔρως, on the one hand, and all the perspectives that, on the other hand, blame, berate and censure ἔρως.

The paradox is therefore created in relation to both views on ἔρως. The prevailing negative view is put in a strange, even absurd situation. It becomes a parody, a caricature of itself. By being blamed and condemned, the views on ἔρως that correspond to παιδεραστία, will be directly confronted and challenged.

So far we have seen that Lysias' speech and Socrates' first speech are examples of paradoxical epideictic rhetoric. We have also seen in what way these speeches are in fact paradoxical. But the fact that they are paradoxical and epideictic has consequences in the way these speeches are to be read. Any reading of Lysias' speech must not overlook the fact that, in all likelihood, he was not trying to be taken seriously. Lysias was not in the existential situation typical of the wooing speech. In fact, this speech is far from being an earnest effort to woo a boy by showing him all the disadvantages of love and all the benefits of a loveless sexual partnership. It seems to be no more than a rhetorical exercise on an original premise – the same way that, in the context of our culture, which values love to a great degree, we could compose a speech berating those who are silly enough to marry for love and praising those who have the wisdom to choose convenience over any romantic feelings. In other words, it is a display of rhetorical prowess, a παίγνιον[18].

This was, anyway, how both Socrates and Phaedrus interpreted it at first. When Phaedrus tells Socrates about this speech's subject matter (227c5ff.), he does not refer to its truthfulness or to how much he learned from it, but rather to how subtle and ingenious it was to defend such a thesis: 'ἀλλ'αὐτὸ δὴ τοῦτο καὶ κεκόμψευται'. Having just finished reading the speech, Phaedrus compliments its language, not its content: "οὐχ ὑπερφυῶς τά τε ἄλλα καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν εἰρῆσθαι;" (234c6-7). Socrates himself, most likely ironically, does not seem to care about the speech's content, but only about its

[18] This term immediately brings to mind Gorgias' characterisation of his own epideictic speech in praise of Helen (*Helena* 21). Παίγνιον means something one plays with, a toy and, by extension, designates something done light-heartedly, for fun. It is, in this sense, something that lacks a serious purpose. See SEGAL, *op. cit.*, 119: "the work is not bound to a practical purpose or to an imaginary situation of a trial, like the *Palamedes*. It is a free imaginative creation, with no life-and-death alternative present". See also: NESTLE, W., Die Schrift des Gorgias "über die Natur oder über das Nichtseiende", *Hermes* 57 (1922), 551-562, 553; GIGON, O., Gorgias Über das Nichtsein. *Hermes* 71 (1936), 186-213, 190; STEFANINI, L., *L'estetismo di Gorgia*, in *Atti dell'Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti*, 109 (1950-51), 137-139, 138; SEGAL, C. P., Gorgias and the Psychology of the Logos, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 66 (1962), 99-155; BONA, G., Λόγος e ἀλήθεια nell'Encomio di Elena di Gorgia, *Rivista di Filosofia e di Istruzione Classica* 102 (1974), 5-33; TUSZYŃSKA-MACIEJEWSKA, K., Gorgias' apate as an inevitable and justified error of man's aesthetic activity, *Acta Classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debreceniensis* 25 (1989), 19-22; POULAKOS, J., Terms for sophistical rhetoric, in: IDEM (ed.), *Rethinking the history of rhetoric*: multidisciplinary essays on the rhetorical tradition, Boulder (Co.), Westview Pr., 1993, 53-74; NOËL, M.-P., L'enfance de l'art: plaisir et jeu chez Gorgias, *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé* (1994), 71-93; GAGARIN, *op. cit.*

composition: "καὶ ταύτῃ δεῖ ὑπ' ἐμοῦ τε καὶ σοῦ τὸν λόγον ἐπαινεθῆναι, ὡς τὰ δέοντα εἰρηκότος τοῦ ποιητοῦ, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκείνῃ μόνον, ὅτι σαφῆ καὶ στρογγύλα, καὶ ἀκριβῶς ἕκαστα τῶν ὀνομάτων ἀποτετόρνευται;' and adds: 'τῷ γὰρ ῥητορικῷ αὐτοῦ μόνῳ τὸν νοῦν προσεῖχον" (234e5ff.). Neither Phaedrus nor Socrates seems to take its content very seriously and its basic premise is seen as important only as far as it is new, clever and hard to defend. They deal with it as the product of an ingenious mind – and perhaps reasonably so, since one would not read a paradoxical ἐγκώμιον expecting to learn anything about its subject matter. If one wants to learn something meaningful, say, about mice, Polycrates' ἐγκώμιον probably would not be the best source of information[19]. Likewise, if one were really interested in the role of ἔρως in human life, there might be better places than Lysias' speech to look into.

That being the case, should not the speech be put aside and dismissed as complete nonsense, or, at any rate, void of significance? If we are dealing with a text written by someone whose only goal is to dazzle its listeners, who has no intention of teaching anything about its subject, why should we pay any attention to its content? What is the point in examining a text with these characteristics? After reading Lysias' speech it is quite easy to give in to the temptation to dismiss it as simply another clever display-piece by an orator with too much time in his hands. And there are some good reasons for this: its basic thesis is deemed to be preposterous, an exercise in paradoxical thinking; its arguments are monotonously repetitive and not at all convincing; its argumentative structure is messy, without any apparent order or connexion between the arguments, apart from the central objective of reviling those who are unfortunate enough to actually fall in love, and, lastly, the actions the speech proposes and the reasons it gives for them are so repugnant to us that one cannot but conclude that Plato must have been joking when he decided to include such a text in one of his dialogues. Socrates' own criticism and apparent refutation can only further this impression.

Socrates' first speech also displays problems regarding its epideictic nature. The speech is the result of what we could call an epideictic challenge issued by Phaedrus. Socrates' task is to produce a speech with the same thesis as Lysias', but surpassing the famous orator's attempt in quality. One of the many manifestations of Socratic irony is the repeated declaration of incompetence in rhetorical matters. Socrates, the incompetent

[19] See BURGESS, *op. cit.*, 166.

orator, has now to surpass Lysias, beat him at his own game, defending the same thesis and renouncing what would probably, in normal circumstances, give an advantage to Socrates: the invention of new arguments. The game will supposedly be decided in terms of composition, not invention. This creates a distance between Socrates as the author of the speech and its content. We know from the very start that Socrates is not giving voice to his own convictions. We also know that whatever he will be saying in the speech will presumably have been forced from him by Phaedrus' threat, or, at the very least, will be voiced under the pretence of being under duress. Socrates is, at least apparently, an unwilling participant in the epideictic competition, someone forced to put forward arguments supporting a thesis that, at the beginning of the dialogue, he mocked and that, after having said the speech, he will find blasphemous. It is difficult to imagine a greater distance between a speech and its author or a more explicit and emphatic declaration of the epideictic character of a speech. This is a speech that is explicitly produced for show, to indulge Phaedrus' φιλολογία. But it can also be understood as a speech produced to weaken Lysias' claim to rhetorical prowess, to show that Lysias' speech is, in fact, a very poor speech. If that is the case, then, Socrates will just be pretending to be under duress. We will therefore be a willing participant in the epideictic competition. More than that, he will be engaging in that same competition motivated, at least in part, by the most epideictic of reasons: to show that the opponent did a worse job than what one is about to do.

Yet, this is also a speech that emphasises the connection with truth. The speech begins by asserting the need to define the subject matter, to have a clear understanding of what ἔρως is before judging its role in human life. It is from this effort to define the subject matter that the argument on the hybristic nature of ἔρως arises. And it is this definition that leads to its characterisation as a disease and as a form of obsessive consumption of the beloved by the lover. The attempt to define ἔρως, however successful or unsuccessful it may be, firmly connects this speech with some kind of truth claim. The whole speech results from supposedly true knowledge regarding the nature of ἔρως.

But the difficulties surrounding this speech are then compounded by the fact that it contains a story, and a story that has serious consequences in our assessment of the earnestness of its content. Socrates does not pronounce the speech as if he was its author. He creates a little story and fictional characters, one of which will be the fictional speaker of the rest of the speech. The narrative framing device of the speech introduces another

degree of distance between a reluctant Socrates and the speech, but also complicates the matter regarding its relationship with the truth. The fictional speaker is a lover that pretends not to be in love with the boy the speech is fictionally addressed to. He is lying. So what we are left with is an epideictic speech about a liar voicing his concern with the truth. An epideictic speech claiming to be truthful is part of the game: this claim will just be another instrument in its pursuit of creating plausibility and persuasion. But the fact that a speech is epideictic is enough to warn us that truth might not be its primary concern. In the case of Socrates' first speech, we are also told that the fictional speaker is lying, at least in one respect. He is, in fact, misrepresenting himself as a way of adding persuasive weight to his arguments. All these factors together exponentially complicate the relationship between this speech and the truth. This is further complicated by the complex mise en abîme constituted by the story within a story that frames this speech. The story of the αἰμύλος is set within the Socrates' first speech, which is set within the account in dialogue form of Socrates' conversation with Phaedrus. The fact that the fictional speaker is lying opens up the possibility that Socrates himself is lying, misrepresenting the fictional speaker. And, for that matter, it also may lead to questioning the status and earnestness of Plato's setting into dialogue of Socrates' and Phaedrus' conversation. This creates a situation where it becomes very difficult to find a firm footing from which to ascertain the status of the speech and its content.

The epideictic character of the speech, together with the fact that the fictional speaker is a liar, would probably recommend that we disregard and dismiss this speech as a reliable source for theses and arguments regarding the subject matters we are trying to study. As with Lysias' speech, it could be reduced to a mere stepping-stone in the way towards the real platonic view on love, madness and lucidity in this dialogue, expressed in the palinode.

This view, however plausible it might seem, should be completely rejected for no other reason than that it assumes too much. Generally speaking, it assumes that on reading Plato (or any other philosophical author, for that matter) one should concentrate on conclusions or, at least, on the exposition of the author's view on the subject he is dealing with. According to this view, Lysias' and Socrates' speeches cannot be more than stepping stones, though very strange ones, on the staircase that will take us to the wonderful heights of Plato's *real* views on love. They were probably necessary steps for Plato, for some reason, in the process of forming or expressing his doctrine; for us, however, who already

know what Plato's doctrine is, this step is superfluous. Regardless of the reasons Plato had to include these speeches in the *Phaedrus*, one thing is clear to this view: one can learn nothing from these texts. If the purpose of the present study were just to present Plato's opinion about the phenomena of love and madness, this view probably would not be without some merit. In that case, a clear and precise doxographic account of Plato's doctrine (however difficult that may be) would be enough, and trying to decipher texts such as Lysias' speech or Socrates' first speech would be a ridiculous waste of time and energy. But this is also assumes that the *corpus platonicum* is constituted by texts of a declarative nature. In other words, this supposes that the texts of the *corpus platonicum* were written in such a way as to clearly and directly express the philosophical thought of their author. It supposes that it is possible to actually find out what Plato meant, in the midst of all the strategies, ploys and tricks he used to conceal himself and whatever his "doctrine" might have been – and that is far from clear.

This study, in any case, has a different purpose. Instead of trying to complete the herculean task of giving a thorough doxographic account of Plato's view on this matter (supposing that is even possible), it undertakes another task no less formidable: to better understand the phenomena of madness and sanity, using Plato's work as a guide. But even for the purpose of producing a doxographic account, dismissing these speeches would be a mistake, because such a dismissal assumes, without further examination, that the palinode is, at least in the *Phaedrus*, Plato's last word on the matter and that, in light of the previous speeches, one can add nothing to nor change any of the theses set forth in the last speech. The risk of letting something fundamental slip in our analysis is one we cannot afford. Therefore, Lysias' speech must be judged on its own merits, and the way to do this is to examine it closely and see what comes out of it.

We must also consider that this way of dealing with a text is not in any way exclusive of epideictic oratory. In fact, any text whatsoever can be read as nothing more than an exercise or game in putting together words, phrases and sentences whose value should be derived not from its meaning, but rather from the ingenuity displayed in its composition. One could read Plato in such a fashion and admire nothing more than his linguistic skills and his literary style. Because any text can be read as if it were epideictic, it is irrelevant, at least up to a certain point, whether the author's intention was to be taken seriously or not. Furthermore, if the goal of the reader is to extract from the text some kind of substantial meaning, then he should take primarily into account the speech's

content and consider its possible epideictic nature only as far as it might be relevant to its meaning. Even if the author was not in the least concerned with its speech's cognitive value, one cannot dismiss without any examination the possibility that the speech can have something to say about its subject. In other words, it does not make any difference if the author wanted to be taken seriously or not; in any case, it is our duty to examine the text as attentively and as earnestly as possible, because we might find, in the middle of all that rhetorical apparatus, something whose relevance was previously overlooked. In fact, the possibility that a purely epideictic speech, i.e., a speech composed just to show off the author's rhetorical abilities, may present valid arguments cannot be dismissed, even if the validity of the arguments is not the primary concern.

But the significance of paradoxical epideictic texts may be more than just a possibility that any cautious and attentive reader cannot and should not dismiss. The fact that these texts produce paradoxical effects through the mediation of commonly held beliefs, means that they reflect those commonly held beliefs. They reflect these beliefs, on the one hand, by the use of some of them to build plausibility into the speech. One the other hand, however, a paradoxical epideictic speech challenges those same beliefs, thereby reflecting them. The speech might not be powerful enough to dislodge them, but it might have enough effect to force the audience to find a way to answer the challenge. By challenging those beliefs in such a spectacular way, paradoxical epideictic rhetoric might make the audience look back at their own beliefs to find a way to justify and sustain them. Faced with the absurd and the ridiculous effects created through the manipulation of what they believed to be clear and obvious, they might now try to ascertain the truthfulness and earnestness of their beliefs. Paradoxical epideictic rhetoric projects a distorted and caricatured mirror image of those beliefs, thereby naturally eliciting rejection – a rejection, however, that might be sustained by an examination of the beliefs themselves and the grounds to hold them. This reaction can be merely accidental – but this can also be done on purpose. The intention of the author of this kind of texts might be to provoke exactly this kind of reaction – this might just be an unintended and even unexpected effect. But it is possible that this kind of text can be used precisely with this provocative intention. The παίγνιον, therefore, can hide a very serious intention and be

the starting point of a radical examination of the perspective that sees it as absurd and ridiculous[20].

4.3. The problem of the palinode's epideictic character

In the case of Lysias' and Socrates' first speech, which, as we have seen, are paradoxical in relation to both opposing views on ἔρως, it is possible to read them as a challenge to both the prevailing negative view on ἔρως and the specific alternative positive perspective represented by παιδεραστία. Such a challenge might possibly elicit a reaction: a reaction that, in certain circumstances, leads to a substantial revision of one's beliefs and inaugurate a radically different perspective on these matters. Intentional or not, Socrates' second speech, the palinode, is an instance of that reaction. However, whereas Lysias' and Socrates' first speech are explicitly treated as showpieces of rhetorical prowess – even if they can be read as much more than that – the palinode seems to be a different matter. What motivates Socrates to compose this new and unexpected speech is something presented as being very serious: the divine sign that made him realise that he had blasphemed against a god, Ἔρως. By agreeing, albeit reluctantly, to follow Lysias' footsteps in producing a censure of love, Socrates seemingly followed him in the

[20] The word παίγνιον does not appear in the *Phaedrus*, but its correlate παιδιά and the verb παίζειν make several appearances. The first two occurrences (229b8, 229c8) refers to the nymph Oreithuia playing with her friends. The next two occurrences (234d7, 234d8), however, appear in the context of Socrates' appraisal of Phaedrus' reading of Lysias' speech: Phaedrus doubts the seriousness of Socrates' lavish praises. In these occurrences, παίζειν is explicitly contrasted with σπουδάζειν. These are the only appearances of παίζειν or παιδιά in the first part of the *Phaedrus*. After the palinode, these words become more frequent. Both words appear in 265c8, in this case referring back to the palinode and qualifying it as παιδιά. The next occurrences (276b5, 276d6, 276d8, 276e1, 276e2, 277e6) all appear in the context of Socrates' critique of writing. The final occurrence (278b7) qualifies the discussion on speechmaking itself. All the post-palinode appearances of παίζειν and παιδιά seem to cast doubt on the seriousness not only of the palinode, but also of the very act of speech-writing and speechmaking, and even on the act of discussing them. It is unlikely, however, that qualifying these as "fun and games" completely destroys the relevance and importance of what has taken place in the *Phaedrus*. On the significance of παιδιά in Plato's philosophical project and particularly in the *Phaedrus*, see: GUNDERT, H., Wahrheit und Spiel bei den Griechen, in: MARX, W. (ed.), Das Spiel, Wirklichkeit und Methode, Freiburger Dies Universitatis XIII, Freiburg, Schulz, 1966, 13-34; ARDLEY, G., The Role of Play in the Philosophy of Plato, *Philosophy* 42 (1967), 226-244; PLASS, P., "Play" and Philosophic Detachment in Plato, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 98 (1967), 342-364; SAKONJI, S., Plato's philosophy and παιδιά, *Journal of Classical Studies* 23 (1974), 50-55; DESCHOUX, M., Platon ou le jeu philosophique, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1980; KRENTZ, A., Dramatic Frame and Philosophical Content in Plato's Dialogues, *Philosophy and Literature* 7 (1983), 32-47, 43; COULOUBARITSIS, L., Le jeu dans la philosophie ancienne et contemporaine, in: *Homo ludens* : huit exposés / éd. par VIRÉ, G, Bruxelles, Université Libre de Bruxelles Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres, 1988, 81-110; RUTHERFORD, *op. cit.*, 25-26; JOUËT-PASTRÉ, E., Le jeu et le sérieux dans les « Lois » de Platon, diss. Université de Rouen, 1998; EADEM, Jeu et éducation dans les « Lois », *Cahiers du Centre Gustave-Glotz* 11 (2000), 71-84; NORMANDEAU, G., *Le philosophe et ses jeux : étude sur la notion de jeu appliqué aux discours chez Platon*, diss. Université de Montreal, 2008.

path of blasphemy. What started as a playful display of skill now becomes something potentially dangerous. Socrates strongly emphasizes the need to distance himself even further from the speech he has just made. He has to produce a retraction, a praise of the same phenomenon that was so criticized in the previous speeches. The apparent seriousness of the new speech is emphasised by the use of lofty and solemn language, the employment of religious and mythical images and, overall, the dignity of the subject.

There is a sense of ambiguity throughout this whole exchange. On the one hand, Socrates emphasizes the blasphemous nature of the previous speeches and the dangers that can result from such blasphemy; on the other, however, it is possible (and Phaedrus seems to be of that opinion) that this is no more than a mock solemn way of going about making a different speech. From our point of view, it may be easy to dismiss Socrates' religious tone as a mere parody. It would be, however, reckless to ignore how important the relationship with the gods was in the context of ancient Greek culture. In particular, we cannot dismiss as irrelevant the strong tradition, alluded to in this passage, that understands the gods as exceedingly powerful beings capable of tremendous vengeance against those mortals who offend them[21]. Even if these traditional beliefs were, in Socrates' time, already the subject of intellectual criticism and disbelief, they were still part of the mainstream tradition, and it is very likely that there were some or even many in contemporary Athens that still held strongly to those beliefs. The appeal to this particular aspect of religious tradition can work as a parody precisely because it is possible to still take it seriously, or, better yet, it appeals and alludes to something that is still taken seriously by some. In order to praise ἔρως, Socrates has to perorate about such important subjects as the composition of the cosmos, the immortality and nature of the soul, the life of the gods. No longer will the speeches be dominated by the mundane life of the ordinary Athenian citizen, contrasted with the mad behaviour of the lunatic lover. Taken at its face value, everything in this speech seems to announce to the reader that now, at this point, just now, Socrates is being serious, that what he is saying is actually what he means on the subject of ἔρως.

[21] To offend a god was more than just an individual fault, putting in danger only the one who had committed it. In the ancient Greek culture, ἀσέβεια was understood to draw the wrath of the offended god upon the whole community, not just a particular miscreant. Since it was a threat to the whole community, it was of the utmost importance for the πόλις to punish ἀσέβεια. See GERNET, L., *Recherches sur le développement juridique et morale en Grèce*, Paris, Leroux, 1917, reed. Paris, Albin Michel, 2001, 70ff: "Et d'une façon générale, le délit public d'*asebeia* est nettement, consciemment envisagé en tant qu'atteinte directe à la cité" (72).

Yet, all these signs of seriousness, regardless of the possibility of being a parody, seem to be completely lost on Phaedrus, the first and privileged audience of the speech[22]. From the very start, he seems to be more interested in the fact that Socrates will produce another speech than in the allegedly grave situation that motivates him to do so. When Socrates justifies the need for a retraction on the grounds that Ἔρως, being a god, could not be evil, Phaedrus does not say a word of protest against a statement apparently so at odds with Greek traditional religion. His only reply is an emphatic statement of how pleasant he would find to hear Socrates' palinode (243b7). For Phaedrus, this is just another occasion to indulge his insatiable φιλολογία. From his point of view, Socrates' palinode will just restart and reboot the original epideictic challenge. The original challenge, as we have seen, started with a speech that was, at its core, a ψόγος of ἔρως. To this Socrates had to reply by going over the top, producing a speech on the same subject, with the same basic thesis, but bigger and better. But now Socrates is about the produce an ἐγκώμιον of ἔρως and Phaedrus' first thought is that he will force Lysias to write his own bigger and better praise. After the palinode, Phaedrus' mind is not baffled in amazement; he is not full of questions and perplexities. He is not eager to discuss the subject matter of the speech he has just heard and to solve the many problems and difficulties that lie therein. His first thought is, once again, to the renewed epideictic challenge. He is afraid Lysias will not be able to reply to Socrates' praise, owing to the criticism logographers are object to. And, from this point forward, the palinode seems to be abandoned (257b7ff.). The subject of discussion changes and all the questions that the palinode might arise are left unanswered.

Phaedrus' attitude shows us that it is possible to look at the palinode as a mere epideictic speech, as just another display of rhetorical skill and inventiveness. It is possible, in short, to not take it seriously. Inversely, Socrates reaction to the content of Lysias' and his own speech tells us how even two speeches taken at first as merely epideictic can end up being taken very seriously. Even a text like the palinode, preceded by insistent avowals of its own seriousness, can be read and dealt with as a mere plaything. That the reader's tendency seems to be most often the opposite is a testament to the power of this text to draw philosophical interest. But the fact that, within the

[22] See GRISWOLD, *op. cit.*, 21: "Equally revealing is his extraordinary lack of response to Socrates' palinode. Phaedrus only compliments on the style and wonders whether Lysias will be able to match the performance (257c); he fails to raise a single question about the palinode!"

dramatic structure of the *Phaedrus*, the palinode can be understood as just another step in the rhetorical back-and-forth between Socrates and Lysias, highlights the possibility that the philosophical importance generally attributed to this text might be somewhat exaggerated. As we have said before, any text whatsoever can be read as merely epideictic. The text itself might have qualities that invite and encourage questioning and inquiry, but, in the end, all depends on the attitude and actions of the reader. On the other hand, a text might be composed just for the sake of making something beautiful and pleasant, but an attentive and interested reader might draw from that apparently shallow and frivolous source elements of significant cognitive value. Once the text is as provocative as some paradoxical epideictic speeches can be, this can become the beginning of a process of justification, re-examination and revision of long held beliefs. Understood as just another step within an ongoing epideictic challenge, the palinode might also be seen as just an intermediate step in the process of an evolving and changing perspective on ἔρως. In the same way that there are in Socrates' first speech elements of considerable importance added to the perspective at stake in Lysias' speech, and in the same way the palinode changes and expands the view of ἔρως present in the previous two speeches, it is possible that a subsequent speech within this sequence, be it by Lysias, Socrates or anyone else would bring into the foreground more important elements for the understanding of this phenomenon. We will never know for certain if that would have happened, since Plato stopped where he stopped. But the fact that it stops so abruptly, not by exhausting the subject, but simply because the conversation changes its course, alongside with the multiple references to a possible reply by Lysias, suggests the possibility that the palinode should not be read, without any qualifications, as Plato's last and definitive word on the matter. All possibilities will have to remain open.

5. Other problems concerning the status of Socrates' speeches

One of the reasons to be wary of any interpretation that claims to uncover Plato's position on any kind of subject lies with the fact that, throughout the *corpus*, he is always hiding himself. The fact that the preferred literary form is the dialogue contributes decisively to this purpose. The dialogues contain a multiplicity of characters, voices and viewpoints that debate with and contradict each other, making it very difficult to understand what Plato, as an author, is really trying to convey, if anything specific at all.

The attempt to solve this problem by focusing on the figure of Socrates carries its own difficulties. Socrates seldom presents himself as the spokesperson of any specific viewpoint or thesis. He is usually the one that questions, interrogates and prods his interlocutor, trying to extract from him the theses to be analysed and, in most cases, torn to pieces. Any positive result that might arise from this operation is most of the times said to arise from the interlocutor, not from Socrates himself. He is only there to help – even if, in many cases, he may actually be manipulating his interlocutor to provide a specific answer. That there is a disconnection between his self-presentation as someone deprived of any kind of positive knowledge and as a simple trigger and catalyst of knowledge in others and the fact that he is very often the one that puts forward new solutions for the problem at stake is very easy to observe. There are many instances in the dialogues where Socrates takes the initiative of introducing a different viewpoint, a different solution, a thesis that might open a way out of the difficulties of the debate. Almost all of these cases, however, are accompanied by repeated and insistent declarations rejecting Socrates' authorship of the theses in question. The ideas that he puts forward are not his own, or so we are told. They are usually attributed to some wise man or woman, either named or not, or to a set of wise people, or to some other indeterminate source. These denials of authorship are consistent with Socrates' repeated avowals of ignorance and establish an important distance between the character Socrates and the perspectives he is putting forward.

This, however, corresponds to Socrates' "self-portrayal"; this does not seem to correspond entirely with reality. It is an act, a ploy, an instance of the famous Socratic irony[23]. It is therefore impossible to use Socrates as the fixed point in which to find "Platonic doctrine" because Socrates does not stay the same throughout the *corpus platonicum.* He changes his act as the interlocutors change. Plus, the relationship between

[23] On the notion of Socratic irony, see, e.g.: SCHAERER, R. Le Mécanisme de l'Ironie dans ses Rapports avec la Dialectique, *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* 48 (1941), 181–209; PLASS, P., Philosophical Anonymity and Irony in the Platonic Dialogues, *American Journal of Philology* 85 (1964), 254-278; BURGER, R., Socratic Irony and the Platonic Art of Writing, *Southwestern Journal of Philosophy* 9 (1978), 113-126; VLASTOS, G., Socratic Irony, *Classical Quarterly* 37 (1987), 79-96; ROOCHNIK , D., Socratic Ignorance as Complex Irony: A Critique of Gregory Vlastos, *Arethusa* 28 (1995), 39 –52; GORDON, J. Against Vlastos on Complex Irony, *Classical Quarterly* 46 (1996), 131 –137; VASILIOU, I., Conditional irony in the Socratic dialogues, *Classical Quaterly* 49 (1999), 456-72; VASILIOU, I., Socrates' Reverse Irony, *Classical Quarterly* 52 (2002), 220-230; GRISWOLD, C., Irony in the Platonic Dialogues, *Philosophy and Literature* 26 (2002), 84-106; MCCABE, M. M., Irony in the soul: should Plato's Socrates be sincere?, In: TRAPP, M. B. (ed.), *Socrates, from Antiquity to the Enlightenment*, Aldershot and Burlington, VT, Ashgate, 2007, 17–32; LANE, M., Reconsidering Socratic Irony, in MORRISON, D. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Socrates*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011, 237-259.

the different pieces of the *corpus platonicum* is such that theses presented in one of the dialogues might and will be in conflict with others in different dialogues, sometimes even in contradiction. This is not necessarily the sign of an evolution or development in Plato's philosophical thought, nor is it the result of some kind of incurable tendency towards inconsistency[24]. It rather indicates that the Platonic project is very different from what we

[24] The view that the inconsistencies, or, to use a more neutral word, differences in theses from dialogue to dialogue are the result of a development in Plato's thought has a long and prestigious history and is still in vogue. This is the so-called developmental hypothesis and is accompanied by some sort of chronological order of the Platonic dialogues. The specific order of the dialogues may suffer several variations from critic to critic, but it is usually agreed that Plato's literary career can be divided into three distinct periods: "early", "middle" and "late". Dialogues are more or less tidily arranged within these periods, although there is often disagreement in respect to detail. The developmental hypothesis states not only that Plato's thought *changed* throughout his very long life (which would be unremarkable), but that it progressed and developed from an early and still immature form to its late and, presumably, definitive stage. The differences between dialogues would then be more than just the result of change, in the neutral sense of the word: they would constitute improvement. Earlier dialogues could therefore be read and understood as preliminary and still imperfect approaches to the philosophical themes developed in later dialogues. It is also assumed that establishing at least a tentative chronology is a fundamental condition for understanding Plato's philosophy. There is some, though very little, internal evidence to corroborate this kind of arrangement, with a few exceptions. For example, it is very likely, for dramatic reasons, that the *Theaetetus* precedes the *Sophist* and the *Politicus*; this, however, does not mean that the *Theaetetus immediately* precedes the other two: it is possible that Plato wrote the *Sophist* many years later, and decided to set it immediately after the *Theaetetus*. By the same token, however, one could group together all the dialogues that are set immediately before and during Socrates' trial, imprisonment and execution (*Meno*, *Euthyphron*, *Apology*, *Criton*, *Phaedo*), since they form a dramatic sequence. Dramatic sequence does not equate composition sequence, and dramatic cross-referencing between dialogues can tell very little about date or order of composition. The chronological arrangement is also often supported by stylometric studies, which identify differences in style between different dialogues, grouping together dialogues where certain keywords and phrases can be found more or less regularly. See LEDGER, G., Re-Counting Plato: *A Computer Analysis of Plato's Style*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989; BRANDWOOD, L., *The Chronology of Plato's Dialogues*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990; IDEM, Stylometry and Chronology, in: KRAUT, R. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992, 90-120; KAHN, C. On Platonic chronology, in: ANNAS, J. and ROWE, C. (eds), *New Perspectives on Plato, Modern and Ancient*, Washington, D.C., Center for Hellenic Studies, 2002, 93-127. Stylometry's assumption that style and word usage change with time and age is not unreasonable. However, it is unclear how grouping together dialogues with similar style could, just by itself, establish a relative chronology. One will need a fixed point from which the rest can be dated. This is usually assumed to be *Laws*, usually considered to be Plato's last dialogue. Even this, however, is far from certain. There is also very little biographical or external evidence for the relative chronology of the dialogues. We know from ARISTOTLE (*Politics* 1264b2) that the *Republic* was written before *Laws*. We also know from DIOGENES LAERTIUS' (3.37) account of Plato's life that the *Laws* were still in wax tablets when he died. This is generally assumed as indicating that *Laws* were his final work, but that is not necessarily so (see OWEN, G., The Place of the *Timaeus* in Plato's Later Dialogues, *Classical Quarterly* 3 (1953) 79-95, 93, n. 3). There are other possible reasons for changes in style, e.g., difference in tone, subject matter, dramatic setting, even characterisation of the interlocutors, and these do not depend on the author's age. It is possible, therefore, that two dialogues similar in style might have been written years and years apart, and two dialogues with very different styles could have been written one immediately after the other. In the same passage mentioned above (3.37), Diogenes Laertius also states that the beginning of *Republic* was found amongst Plato's dying "papers", revised several times (see also DIONYSUS OF HALICARNASSUS, *De compositione verborum* 25, 207-218). This obviously does not mean that *Republic* was still being written at this stage, but rather suggests that Plato might have had the habit of going back to revise and change his dialogues, even after they were "finished". It suggests, in fact, the interesting possibility that each dialogue might have been a work in progress, always susceptible to alterations. The possibility of continuous revision throws a spanner into the works of stylometry, and, for that matter, into any attempt to produce a chronology based on elements of style, and even cross-

expect in philosophical writing. He is not writing treatises; he is writing dialogue. This is more than a difference in format; it is a difference in how philosophy is expressed: on the one hand, the direct and clear statement of theses and perspectives; on the other hand, a mode of expression that forces the reader to go through a philosophical process. The Platonic dialogues are more than just a way of expressing a thesis or set of theses on a specific theme by setting them in a specific dramatic context and by putting them in the mouth, so to speak, of different characters in conversation with each other. In fact, one could do just that and end up with a "treatise in dialogue form". [25]

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referencing. All this persuades us that it is probably more productive to avoid the pitfalls of assigning a place to the *Phaedrus* into a relative chronology. But perhaps the assumption that is most relevant to this study is the one that states that establishing the chronological order of Plato's dialogues is essential for their interpretation. We reject this assumption. Our approach is neutral in what regards the establishment of any chronology. It is irrelevant for our purposes at what point in Plato's life the *Phaedrus* was composed, or even its relative place within the chronology. We recognise that the *Phaedrus*, like any other Platonic dialogue, cannot be read in isolation from the rest of the *corpus*, and that it is fruitful and even, at some stages, inevitable to explore connections with other dialogues. But these connections are not chronological in nature, nor do they depend on chronology. In addition to this, the idea that chronology is an essential tool in understanding Plato's thought assumes that the dialogues were a form of expressing that same thought clearly and directly. In other words, it assumes that the dialogues are declarative in nature, even if said declarative nature is hidden. Our understanding is that the theses and perspectives presented in the dialogues are like pieces of a puzzle, some of them, perhaps, even superfluous and misleading. It is up to the reader to reconstruct the puzzle. As a whole, the *corpus Platonicum* itself has the structure of a dialogue: different parts communicating with each other in sometimes strange and odd combinations. The strange nature of the *corpus* makes the need to establish a chronology unimportant. See: GROTE, G., *Plato, and the Other Companions of Socrates* 1, London, J. Murray, 1865, 170-211; SHOREY, P, *The Unity of Plato's Thought*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1903; TAYLOR, A., *Plato: The Man and His Work*, London, Metheun & Co., 1929, 18-22; ROSS, D., *Plato's Theory of Ideas*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1951, 1-10; GUTHRIE, W., *A History of Greek Philosophy* 4, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 48-52; TIGERSTEDT, E., *Interpreting Plato*, Uppsala, Almqvist & Wiskell, 1977; IRWIN, T. M., *Plato's Moral Theory: The Early and Middle Dialogues*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977, 291-293; KAHN, C., Did Plato Write Socratic Dialogues?, *Classical Quarterly* 31 (1981) 305-320; THESLEFF, H., *Studies in Platonic Chronology*, Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1982, see especially 171ff.; WIELAND, *Platon und die Formen des Wissens*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1982, 83ff.; KAHN, C., On the Relative Date of the Gorgias and the Protagoras, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 6 (1988) 69-102; KAHN, C., Plato's Charmides and the Proleptic Reading of the Socratic Dialogues, *The Journal of Philosophy* 85 (1988) 541-549; THESLEFF, H., Platonic Chronology, *Phronesis* 34 (1989) 1-26; GRISWOLD, C., Unifying Plato: Charles Kahn on Platonic Prolepsis, *Ancient Philosophy* 10 (1990) 243-263; HOWLAND, J., Re-Reading Plato: The Problem of Platonic Chronology, *Phoenix* 45 (1991), 189-214; DENYER, N., *Plato: Alcibiades*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, 17-24; TAYLOR, C., The Origins of Our Present Paradigms, in: ANNAS, J., ROWE, C. (eds.), *op. cit.*, 73-84; ANNAS, J., What are Plato's 'Middle' Dialogues in the Middle Of?, *ibidem*, 1-23; GRISWOLD, C., Comments on Kahn, *ibidem*, 129-144; IRWIN, T. H., The Platonic Corpus, in: FINE, G. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Plato*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 63-87. Cf. p. 3, n. 11, above.

[25] On the specificity of the dialogue form and how it influences Platonic interpretation, see, e.g.: Schleiermacher, *op. cit.*; SCHAERER, R., *La question Platonicienne*, Neuchâtel, Secrétariat de l'Université, 1938; GOLDSCHMIDT, V., *Les Dialogues de Platon: Structure et méthode dialectique* Paris, PUF, 1947; MERLAN, P., Form and Content in Plato's Philosophy, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 8 (1947): 406-30; TARRANT, D., Style and Thought in Plato's Dialogues, *Classical Quarterly* 42 (1948): 28-34; STENZEL, J., *Kleine Schriften zur griechischen Philosophie*, Darmstadt, Gentner, 1956, 314ff.; SINAIKO, H., *Love, Knowledge, and Discourse in Plato: Dialogue and Dialectic in* Phaedrus, Republic, Parmenides, Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 1965; O'BRIEN, M., *The Socratic*

What sets aside the "normal" philosophical text from a Platonic dialogue is something different. The purpose of a philosophical treatise is to delineate a philosophical problem and present a way to explore it and, eventually, solve it. For this reason, a philosophical treatise is the bearer of a perspective and a set of positive theses. The author of the treatise speaks *in propria voce*. When one reads the treatise, it is as if the author is talking directly to us, sharing an account of his journey of exploration and what he has discovered in the unknown regions through which he has travelled. There is an assumption of sincerity, honesty, earnestness in his account. We assume that what he is telling us is the truth as far as he knows it. It is also assumed that the truth as far as he knows it is told to us directly, simply, clearly. The author expresses himself in a declarative form: this is X, or Y, or Z. Whatever might be hidden, whatever can be discovered in the text beyond what is explicitly stated is the result not of the author's design, but of the fact that human communication is built on assumptions, on layers upon layers of things left unsaid, but that can be unearthed and revealed through careful and diligent analysis.

In the case of a Platonic dialogue, however, something very different happens. It is not just the case that the author, Plato, hides himself behind his own characters. Socrates, or, for that matter, any other of the major characters (be it the Eleatic Stranger of the *Sophist* and the *Statesman*, be it the Athenian Stranger in the *Laws*, or even Timaeus and Critias in their eponymous dialogues) are not simply presented as stand-ins for the author, masks that Plato wears for the purpose of expressing himself. Even if, for example, the main character of most of the dialogues were to be Plato himself instead of a version of his famous master, that would not change the way in which the problems, theses and perspectives that constitute the *corpus* are expressed and presented. Unlike a treatise, the *corpus platonicum* does not use a straightforward declarative form. It does not simply state that its theses about a specific matter are X, Y or Z. This does not mean that the *corpus* is constituted by a multiplicity of hypothetical, interrogative or merely

Paradoxes and the Greek Mind, Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1967, 6ff.; HYLAND, Why Plato Wrote Dialogues, *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968), 38-50; KRENTZ, *op. cit.*; GUNDERT, H., *Dialog und Dialektik*, Amsterdam, Grüner, 1971, 1-12; EBERT, T., *Meinung und Wissen in der Philosophie Platons*, Berlin, De Gruyter, 1971; SALLIS, J., *Being and Logos: The Way of Platonic Dialogue*, Pittsburgh, Duquesne University Press, 1975, 12ff; WIELAND, *op. cit.*, 50ff; HATHAWAY, R., Explaining the Unity of the Platonic Dialogue, *Philosophy and Literature* 8 (1984), 195-208; GRISWOLD, C., Self-Knowledge in Plato's Phaedrus, University Park, Penn., Pennsylvania University Press, 1986, 219-226; ROWE, C., *Plato and the Art of Philosophical Writing*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, 1ff.; GRISWOLD, C., Reading and Writing Plato, *Philosophy and Literature* 32 (2008), 205-216.

vague statements. What this means is rather that at no point can the reader be sure of the status of whatever seems to be positively declared within the dialogues, be it by Socrates or by any other character. Any positive statement seems to be constantly put in jeopardy by counter-arguments, inconsistencies, contradictions, and even hints within the dramatic setting suggesting that whatever is being said should be taken *cum grano salis*. The pattern of denial of authorship is an important element in the undermining of status that characterises the *corpus platonicum*. The fact that Socrates seldom assumes responsibility for what is said makes whatever could be taken as "Platonic doctrine" all the more difficult to pin down.

But this is just part of a more generalised feature, one that characterises each element of the *corpus platonicum* and the *corpus* as a whole. The declarative insecurity that characterises Platonic dialogues seems to be the result of design, not an accidental feature. This is what makes the *corpus platonicum* such a difficult terrain to explore. It is very hard to find a firm footing. The landscape keeps changing, often in unexpected ways. And when one finally finds what seems to be solid ground on which to stand, it is not unusual to find oneself sinking as if one were standing on a quagmire. The status of the texts that constitute the *corpus platonicum* is constantly being questioned. The result is not a denial of the truthfulness of the perspectives and theses contained in the texts, but rather a permanent need to judge on a case by case basis the truthfulness of each thesis and the validity of each argument. The fact that the status of the texts is always in question thrusts upon the reader the task and responsibility to judge him or herself where, if anywhere, the truth conveyed by the *corpus platonicum* lies. In the end, the only way to understand Platonic philosophy is to philosophise.

Denial of authorship assumes a particular importance in the *Phaedrus*. This is a dialogue that is made up of speeches to a considerable extent. The first of these speeches is attributed to Lysias. If this is really a work by Lysias that Plato has appropriated for his own philosophical purposes or rather a pastiche is a controversial matter[26]. Regardless of

[26] The question regarding the authorship of the erotic speech attributed to Lysias in the *Phaedrus* has been a matter of endless and inconclusive debate. Stylistic analysis (VAHLEN, J., Über die Rede des Lysias in Platos *Phaedrus*, Sitzungsberichte der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin 2 (1903), 787-816; WEINSTOCK, H., *De Erotico Lysiaco (Platonis Phaedrus 231-234c)*, Diss., Münster, 1912; DIMOCK, G., Ἀλλά in Lysias and and Plato's *Phaedrus*, *American Journal of Philology* 73 (1952), 381-396) has shown similarities with the speeches widely recognized as being by Lysias, but this does not exclude the possibility of the erotic speech being a well accomplished *pastiche*. See RITTER, *op. cit.*, 115-116; ROBIN, *op. cit.*, XIV-XVIII; SHOREY, P., On the Erotikos in Plato's *Phaedrus*, *Classical Philology* 28 (1933), 131-132; LASSERRE, *op. cit.*; HELMBOLD and HOLTHER, *op. cit.*, 412ff.; HACKFORTH,

the answer to this question, the fact is that, within the dialogue, Lysias' speech is treated as a text written by a third party. The interlocutors of the dialogue are recipients of the speech. Phaedrus had had the opportunity to listen to it earlier, read it, and learn it almost by heart (228a5ff.). But it is not his own work, nor does he seem to have been successful in his attempts to absorb it to the point of making it his own. For Socrates, the speech seems to be absolutely new and he seems eager to hear it, though the initial eagerness then turns into disappointment when the speech is finally read.

The transition between Lysias' speech and Socrates' first speech is marked by the discussion regarding the merits of the former (334c7ff.). Phaedrus is enthusiastic in his praise; Socrates receives it coolly and with ironic detachment. During this discussion, Socrates is challenged to produce a speech on the same subject, with the same basic thesis, but better and longer. Phaedrus' motivations, considering his peculiar kind of φιλολογία, are clear. Socrates, however, tries to extricate himself from that embarrassing situation, excusing himself with his lack of rhetorical skill, especially compared with Lysias, the most famous and celebrated orator of his time. Socrates has to be manipulated and

R., *Plato's* Phaedrus, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1952, 16-18; DOVER, K., *Lysias and the* Corpus Lysiacum, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1968, 69-71; DE VRIES, *op. cit.* 11-14; DÖPP, S., Der Verfasser des Erotikos in Platons *Phaedrus*, *Glotta* 61 (1983), 15-29; ROWE, C., Plato: *Phaedrus*, Oxford, Aris & Phillips, 1986, 142-143; GÖRGEMANNS, H., Ein neues Argument für die Echtheit des lysianischen Erotikos, Rheinisches Museum 131 (1988), 108-113; HEITSCH, *op. cit.*, 77-80; SALA, *op. cit.*, 63-71; YUNIS, *op. cit.*, 98. Perhaps more important than the speech's *actual* authorship is the role the authorship of the speech might play in the reading of the dialogue itself. Regarding this, three levels of authorship can be distinguished: 1) the *stated* authorship, which undeniably and explicitly belongs to Lysias; 2) the *actual* authorship, sc. whether the speech was written by Plato and attributed to Lysias, or was written by Lysias and quoted by Plato, which is a still open question; 3) the *perceived* authorship. By perceived authorship we mean the reader's implicit or explicit answer to the authorship question, which is related to the stated and actual authorships, but not necessarily dependent on them. The insistence on attributing the speech to Lysias answers the question regarding the stated authorship. It does not, however, provide an answer to the other two questions. Plato might just be pretending the speech is by Lysias. The effect the insistence on Lysias' authorship has on the reader varies: it can either be accepted as a fact or understood as a dramatic ploy. Actual authorship might play a role in establishing perceived authorship, especially in the case of Plato's contemporaries. If the speech is genuine and known as such by Plato's contemporary readers, then the speech and the dialogue will be read having that in mind. The critique of Lysias' style and argumentation will be, at least at the superficial level, read as an assessment of an actual speech by Lysias, and the points about rhetoric will be addressed to the real Lysias, probably as a representative of contemporary rhetorical practice. Because ancient testimonies on this issue are so scarce, this is impossible to establish, and it is possible ancient readers were faced with the same problem. The lack of conclusive external or textual evidence means the question regarding actual authorship is likely to remain open. This means that modern readers have to look for clues within the dialogue and speculate about Plato's intentions and composition habits and methods. In the end, the answer to this question says more about one's particular understanding of the dialogue, and especially of Lysias' speech, and, by extension, of the other erotic speeches and of the critique of rhetoric, than about the authorship question itself. Perhaps more important than asking who actually wrote Lysias' speech, is if it would at all make a difference if we were to come upon the answer. Socrates' statement in 275b5ff. hints that it might not, or, at least, that it should not.

threatened into submission. Phaedrus threatens Socrates, first with physical violence, and secondly, and more successfully, with depriving Socrates from nourishment to his φιλολογία. The threats of physical violence are playful, as is the overall tone of the whole exchange. The second threat produced the desired effect and Socrates submits to Phaedrus' demands and composes a speech. Socrates resists as much as he can and his speech will be pronounced under duress. He will be arguing for a thesis that is not his own, defending a position that he does not seem to endorse, limited in his freedom to make use of new arguments. This fact, however, should not be entirely imputed to Phaedrus. It is Socrates himself that states that coming up with new arguments would be too difficult, a task Phaedrus does not seem to mind to excuse him from (235e5ff.). This, of course, could be just another of Socrates' excuses, put forward so that he can simply surpass Lysias in his own epideictic game. According to the programme set up for this speech, Socrates' only original contribution will be at the formal level. He has to present Lysias' views, using Lysias' arguments, improving them by the employment of a rhetorical skill he says he does not possess. The speech itself is preceded by an invocation of the Muses (237a8) and the intervention of the nymphs is mentioned as an explanation for the out of the ordinary fluency that Socrates exhibits (238d1ff.).

As pointed out above, all these elements seem to indicate that Socrates is responsible neither for the initiative of composing the speech, nor for its content, nor even for the rhetorical abilities shown in it. It is all someone else's fault. Socrates is presented almost as the mere puppet of a series of extrinsic factors; the speech the undesired result of the conjugation of these factors. To these Socrates adds an element of distance that is internal to the speech. He creates a speech within the speech, or rather a frame story to the speech proper (237b2ff.). This constitutes what might be described as a *mise en abîme*: a story (the speech proper, attributed to the αἰμύλος), within a story (the frame-story about the αἰμύλος pursuing his ἐρώμενος), told by Socrates – and told by Socrates within the dialogue *Phaedrus*, which is itself a story about a fictional conversation between Phaedrus and Socrates, written by Plato. We have already mentioned the peculiar nature of this frame story and its protagonist: the lover that pretends not to be in love in order to get an advantage over his rivals and persuade his beloved to choose him. We also mentioned how this makes the complicated relationship this speech has with the truth even more complicated. He is pretending not to be in love, when he actually is. This undermines his own status as the spokesperson of the perspective that blames ἔρως and

praises its absence. We have already mentioned that it is not just the status of the fictional speaker that is undermined. In fact, by emphasizing that he is voicing the words of a liar, Socrates is casting a shadow over his truthfulness and earnestness, a shadow that extends to Plato himself as the author of the dialogue. It is possible, then, that any of these three figures, the fictional speaker, Socrates and Plato, or the three of them together, might be αἰμύλοι.

But this is not just a matter of earnestness. The fact that the non-lover is actually a lover disturbs the status of what he is about to say in as far as ἔρως is commonly associated (and explicitly linked with it in the speech itself) with μανία. By putting this anti-ἔρως speech in the mouth of someone who is actually in love, Socrates is hinting at the fact that this is a speech against a kind of μανία pronounced by someone who is himself μαινόμενος, and indeed a μαινόμενος of the same kind. By attributing the anti-ἔρως speech to someone else, Socrates was already putting a considerable distance between himself and the speech. By attributing the speech to someone who is not only in an existential situation at odds with the content of the speech, but also suffering from what amounts to a debilitating mental illness, introduces a substantial degree of uncertainty regarding the status of what is about to be said. When reading the speech, one cannot be confident on the authority of the speaker, since he has none. Quite the opposite: everything seems to be set against it.

In the world of Socrates' first speech, nothing seems to be what it is. Socrates himself does not pronounce his speech of his own accord, and, on top of that, he refers in multiple occasions to the fact that his unusual fluency is the result of some kind of divine intervention (238c5ff.; 240e1ff.), an ἐνθουσιασμός, itself a form of μανία. Of course, the references to Socrates being in a state of μανία while making the speech might just be another of Socrates' ploys, and very far away from the true state of Socrates' point of view. Nonetheless, the simple fact that Socrates characterises himself with language related to μανία puts a considerable distance between Socrates and the anti-ἔρως speech he is pronouncing. But it also destabilises the status of the speech even further. Not only is the speech the rejected child of an unwilling father, it also cannot be used to establish theses regarding the matters treated in the speech that may be attributed to the character Socrates, and, *a fortiori*, Plato. We are before a set of statements that are undermined in the very way they are stated.

However, the efforts Socrates makes to distance himself from the content of his first speech do not seem to absolve him from responsibility. The presumed intervention of the δαιμόνιον σημεῖον prevents him from leaving and makes him face the consequences of what he has done (242b7ff.). We should not make the mistake of thinking that Socrates is talking with all the seriousness that the lofty language that he uses would suggest. The whole tone of the transition between the speeches, with all his references to blasphemy and the wrath of the gods may sound quite impressive, but is a bit over the top. It is hard to believe that Socrates was actually convinced that he had committed blasphemy or that he was in grave danger of being sternly punished by the gods, though, as we have mentioned before, he is alluding to a traditional belief still held by many. The paratragic tone of Socrates' statements can have a rather comical effect. But it also grabs the attention both of the reader and of Phaedrus himself and highlights the change of direction the dialogue is about to take. The fact that, nominally at least, Socrates only realises the enormity of what he has said in the previous speech as the result of an event that he explains as being of divine origin does not diminish his obligation to perform the appropriate rituals to expiate his fault. He may repeat and insist on the fact that saying the previous speech was forced upon him by Phaedrus, but he nonetheless will be held responsible for the blasphemy and he will have to take measures to avoid punishment.

The ambiguity of Socrates' position regarding the previous speech is itself a reflection of the ambiguous relationship someone who is under constraint, or perhaps even μαινόμενος, has with the actions he was forced to perform. The aversion he may feel regarding the action itself, along with the fact that he is not entirely responsible for it may justify him being free from punishment and excused from any form of compensation. But the conception of responsibility at stake here is of a different nature. Constraint does not excuse, and being, as Socrates says he was, overtaken by the divine forces of the place does not sever the connection between the action and the agent. The previous speech was and was not Socrates'. The next speech will be Socrates', but it is nonetheless forced on him as a necessary reparation of the damage done by the previous one. The circumstances that constrained him to make another speech were not of his choosing. Taken at its face value (which is most likely a severely inflated value) the risk that comes with blasphemy binds Socrates to the palinode at a very fundamental level. His whole life is at stake – or at least Socrates acts as if he is in dire danger. He has to make amends with the offended

god, lest he be struck down. The reference to Stesichorus and Homer are a warning and cautionary tale, but they also show the way to solve the problem Socrates was forced into: a retraction (243b4ff.). The praise ἔρως is therefore not completely spontaneous and voluntary. Within the dramatic structure of the dialogue, it is somewhat forced on Socrates, due to the dangerous circumstances he finds himself in, even if this is overstated by Socrates. This, however, does not mean that the basic thesis of the palinode is merely programmatic, just a way of getting out of a difficult situation. This, as we have already seen, might be a mere act of make belief, a parody. As we will have the opportunity to see later on in this study, the understanding of the nature of the gods at stake in the idea of gods that avenge the transgressions and offenses made by mortals will be fundamentally questioned and reviewed in the palinode.

But even if we were to take the danger of blasphemy at face value, there is another element to take into consideration, an element that shows that Socrates is concerned with something more than just his own safety. Alongside fear, Socrates says he is motivated by shame (243b6ss.). He is especially ashamed of what a specific kind of people will think of him by having become the spokesperson of a view that is hostile to ἔρως. The people Socrates says would cause him to feel ashamed of what he said about ἔρως are the ones who live ἔρως in a completely different way from the one described in the previous speeches. These people are the examples of a different kind of ἔρως, or rather of a different perspective on this phenomenon that the previous speeches, in their character as censures of ἔρως, had no place for. Socrates mentions these people, those of noble character that are in love, as factual examples of the unilateral deformation of the perspectives regarding ἔρως that constituted the previous speeches. There is little doubt that Socrates is referring to the tradition of ancient παιδεραστία and, to be more precise, to the way those who practiced pederasty understood and justified their activities[27]. The reference to these people shows that the ways of understanding ἔρως and its role in human life were complex and full of controversy.

There is, at the very least, one other way of understanding the phenomenon of ἔρως, a way that, far from the hostile perspective portrayed in Lysias' and Socrates' first speech, sees ἔρως as a positive force in human life. But the way the matter is framed in this passage suggests more than this. On the one hand, what we are dealing with here is

[27] See chapter II, p. 145ff., below.

more than just a mere alternative way of looking at the phenomenon. Socrates seems, at least for the purposes of producing his second speech, to endorse the idea that there is a way in which ἔρως can, in fact, become a positive force. It is possible that what Socrates is talking about is the cultural practice of ancient παιδεραστία. The simple fact that such a thing even exists constitutes a challenge to the mainstream hostile perspective on ἔρως. The fact that this alternative erotic practice is engaged in and defended by people of aristocratic background and way of life only adds influence to it. But it is also possible that Socrates is alluding to something different from ancient παιδεραστία as it was normally practiced. In fact, it is possible that what Socrates is alluding to is a kind of ἔρως that, unlike παιδεραστία, excludes the sexual component. This would be a kind of ἔρως that corresponds to the idealised project of unrelenting beneficence towards the ἐρώμενος that the official discourse of παιδεραστία claims to be, an ideal that lies uncomfortably with the requests for sexual gratification. In other words, it is possible that what Socrates is alluding to is not παιδεραστία as it was normally practiced, but rather an idealised form of παιδεραστία, a παιδεραστία purged from the ordinary sexual component and consisting solely of the project of unrelenting εὔνοια it claims to be.

Regardless of the exact meaning of the noble kind of ἔρως, what we are faced with at this stage of the dialogue, in any case, is a double ἔρως, a phenomenon that is not simple, but rather complex in nature, admitting a plurality of different modalities. The palinode, apparently, will concentrate on one specific modality of ἔρως, supposedly the one practiced by the noble men Socrates has mentioned, whatever that may be. The fact that this is just one in, at the very least, two different modalities of ἔρως works to somehow restrain the scope of Socrates' second speech. According to its own rhetorical programme, Socrates' second speech will be an ἐγκώμιον of ἔρως, but of one kind of ἔρως only. It seems, then, that the problem with the previous speeches is not that they blame ἔρως, but the fact that they blame ἔρως without any distinction between different kinds of ἔρως. By emphasizing the dual nature of ἔρως, Socrates is dealing a significant blow to the previous speeches, which censured ἔρως without distinction, but, at the same time, preserving at least part of the perspectives held by those speeches, by limiting his praise to a very specific and peculiar kind of ἔρως.

Once again, it becomes very difficult to ascertain the seriousness of Socrates' statements. The idea of duality is neither new nor surprising within Greek culture[28], and it is clear that invoking this τόπος together with the possible allusion to παιδεραστία makes it considerably easier to frame and ground what will be a speech containing some very surprising and revolutionary ways of understanding reality and the human condition. It is unclear as well if the model of dual ἔρως will be retained by the revolutionary new understanding of ἔρως introduced in the palinode, or if it was merely used as a rhetorical device. This is a question that can only be answered by analysing the speech itself in detail. What is clear at this stage, however, is that the palinode does not meet the expectations created by the discussion that precedes it. The possible reference to παιδεραστία just before the start of the palinode makes the strong suggestion that Phaedrus will be presented with a version of the conventional pederastic speech. Alternatively, if we were to understand that the kind of ἔρως Socrates is alluding to is an ἔρως that excludes the sexual component, then the readers expectations become different. We would then expect from the palinode an ἐγκώμιον concentrating on ἔρως mainly as a beneficial project, similarly to the way παιδεραστία is idealised and advertised.

[28] The idea of two kinds of x has a long tradition in ancient Greek culture. See, e.g., the two kinds of ἔρις (HESIOD, *Erga* 11-24), the two kinds of αἰδώς (HESIOD, *Erga* 317-318; EURIPIDES, *Hippolytus* 385-386) and the two kinds of ἐλπίς (also HESIOD, *Erga* 96, 498-501); see, on the difficult question regard the ambiguity of ἐλπίς, WEST, M.L. (ed.), *Hesiod: Works and Days*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1978, ad locum; VERNANT, J.-P., À la table des hommes, in DETIENNE, M., VERNANT, J.-P. (eds.), *La cuisine du sacrifice en pays grec*, Paris, Gallimard, 1979, 37-132, particularly, 121ss.; WARMAN, L., Hope in a Jar, Mouseion, series III, vol. 4 (2004), 107-119). On dual ἔρως, see NORTH, H. F., *Sophrosyne*. Self-Knowledge and Self-Restraint in Greek literature, Ithaca, N. Y., Cornell University Press, 1966, 74, n.101. Perhaps the most notorious application of the motif of dual ἔρως can be found in Pausanias' speech in the *Symposium*, where ἔρως is said to possess a dual nature: as ouranios and pandemos (180c4ff). This division is connected with the supposed existence of a dual Aphrodite, with different genealogies and attributes. See HESIOD, *Theogony*, 190ff.; HOMER, *Iliad*, V, 370-430; also HERODOTUS, I, 105, 131; PAUSANIAS, *Periegesis*, 1.14.7., 1.22.3. The distinction between the two kinds of Aphrodite and ἔρως is part of an apologetic strategy. In the context of a society generally suspicious of ἔρως and παιδεραστία, Pausanias introduces a degree of complexity to the phenomenon at stake, and distinguishes a kind of ἔρως that he considers deserving of opprobrium from the praiseworthy kind of ἔρως practiced by those who cultivate παιδεραστία. In other words, this distinction can be seen as a way of defending παιδεραστία against its detractors. See BURY, R. G. (ed.), *The Symposium of Plato*, Cambridge, W. Heffer and Sons, 1909, *ad locum*; DOVER, K. (ed.), *Plato Symposium*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1980, *ad locum*. Cf. Xenophon, *Symposium*, VIII, 9ff., where a similar apologetic strategy is followed. The idea of there being two kinds of μανία is mentioned later on in the *Phaedrus*, when Socrates looks back at the erotic speeches (265a). Also later in the *Phaedrus* there is an allusion to this scheme in reference to ἔρως (266a: the two limbs of the notion, i.e., the left-handed and the right-handed one). It is also interesting to note that this idea of duality can even be found in the ostensive model of Socrates' palinode, Stesichorus' palinode. Stesichorus defence of Helen consists, after all, in stating that there were, in fact two Helens, the real one, who was taken to Egypt, and an εἴδωλον, the one actually taken to Troy. See also Euripides' *Helen*, based on this last version of the myth. In this respect, Socrates follows Stesichorus as well. It is noteworthy how often these distinctions are used in an apologetic context.

At any rate, it seems clear that the inflexion witnessed in the transition between Socrates' first speech and his second speech will lead to an ἐγκώμιον of ἔρως. Now, then, the thesis to be defended will be the opposite of the one defended in the previous speeches. In saying that ἔρως is, after all, something positive and praiseworthy, Socrates will apparently be picking up a well-known pederastic statement. But there is yet another expectation created by Socrates through association with παιδεραστία: that the forthcoming praise of ἔρως will be grounded on similarly pederastic grounds, and with the same purpose. This would be the easiest way to go about it. Socrates would need only pick up conventional pederastic τόποι to produce a convincing speech praising ἔρως and, especially, persuading an ἐρώμενος to do the opposite of what Lysias recommends: to gratify the non-lover instead of the lover. Because the arguments used would not be entirely new, because the audience – and especially someone like Phaedrus, who spends time in the company of aristocrats and literati – would be familiar with and maybe even approve of παιδεραστία, a conventional pederastic speech would be the easiest and safest way of producing an ἐγκώμιον of ἔρως. This would even be in tune with the frequent Socratic claims of lack of rhetorical skill and of him being but the mouthpiece of other people's wisdom. But Socrates does the opposite: after invoking παιδεραστία, either in its real life day to day practice, or in its idealised form, after strongly suggesting he is about to produce a "traditional" wooing speech, Socrates produces something very different. This will become very clear when we proceed with our analysis in subsequent chapters.

This fact should not be underestimated, since it suggests that there is much more to the palinode than just an epideictic reply to the pair of paradoxical epideictic speeches that preceded it. It suggests that the palinode corresponds to what the Socrates of the *Phaedrus* believes to be the truth about ἔρως, or, at least, this kind of ἔρως. It is then also out of concern with the truth, out of a need to present a fuller account of this phenomenon that Socrates decides to compose his palinode. Socrates' position towards the palinode is, therefore, ambiguous. He has to compose one, considering the circumstances he was forced into, but the concern with the truth, the need to complement the preceding biased and incomplete account weigh heavily on him. The fact that he feels compelled to vindicate the offense made both to the god and to those who love in a different and better way shows that he is drawing from an earlier tradition, from a set of perspectives that are not original or peculiar to himself. He is implying that, as he will explicitly state in the

speech, the revolutionary perspective that he is about to introduce is actually the justification of an already existing tradition. What will result from Socrates' retraction is actually something very different from anything ever seen before, something that alters the ancient pederastic tradition in radical and fundamental ways. But the fact that he nonetheless introduces his palinode and justifies its need with references to religion, the poetic tradition and the pederastic tradition show that Socrates, albeit actually a revolutionary, wants to be seen as someone grounded on tradition.

This, however, implies that the palinode is an earnest effort to account for the phenomenon of ἔρως as a positive force in human life. Although this is strongly suggested, it is still impossible to exclude the possibility that the palinode is a mere rhetorical exercise. The explicit connection between the palinode and conventional pederastic speeches suggests a way in which the status of the palinode can yet be considered dubious. Conventional pederastic speeches are wooing speeches: their purpose is to convince the young man they are addressed to to yield to the ἐραστής' advances. In other words, these speeches are part of a strategy that aims at persuading a probably hesitant ἐρώμενος to, amongst other things, consent to grant his sexual favours to the man who pursues him. This element of the wooing speech is also subverted in Socrates' second speech. Instead of exhorting the boy to actually yield, Socrates praises a kind of ἔρως in which the presence of strong sexual desire does not translate into any kind of sexual consummation. This "chaste" ἔρως – chaste in practice, though not in desire – seems to contradict the purposes of the conventional wooing speech entirely. And yet one should never lose sight of the fact that pederastic rhetoric thrives in euphemism, especially in what regards the sexual component of the desired relationship. What the ἐραστής most desires would never be named explicitly, but simply hinted at. This aspect of pederastic rhetoric is closely connected with the ambiguous and problematic status of the boy himself, which becomes the seat of tensions between the desire awaken by his beauty and the limitations imposed by his social standing and his importance as a future citizen[29]. It makes sense, then, that the conventional strategy would consist not in charging head on, but rather in beating around the bush. Socrates does not beat around the bush. He does not shy away from the erotically charged aspect of pederastic ἔρως.

[29] See chapter II, p. 145ff., below.

But his insistence on this matter leads to the opposite of what a normal ἐραστής desires: the absence of sex.

The contrast could not be greater: on the one hand, conventional pederastic rhetoric only speaks of sex subtly and euphemistically, but shows every intention of desiring that outcome; on the other hand, Socrates' wooing speech dwells on the subject of sexual desire with poetically charged and highly suggestive language, but, in the end, recommends abstinence. Even outside the sexual aspect of the speech, it is clear that Socrates' second speech is a much more seductive speech than conventional pederastic speeches usually are. This could suggest to the more cynical reader that the palinode is something different from what it says on the label. What this might be becomes clearer when we remember one single fact about the rhetorical strategy behind Socrates' first speech. In Socrates' first speech, someone pretending not to be in love woos his ἐρώμενος by arguing against ἔρως. Arguing against ἔρως, in line with Lysias' speech, does not entail a rejection of sex, but the opposite. It is also in Socrates' first speech that we find a suggestive description of what sex between ἐραστής and ἐρώμενος would be like: something entirely repulsive from the point of view of the ἐρώμενος. The pattern is to explicitly state and defend the opposite of what the speaker actually is and wants to do. The persuasive and seductive nature of Socrates' palinode may suggest something similar is happening. A wooing speech that recommends not yielding to the ἐραστής sexually would likely appeal to the hesitant ἐρώμενος, afraid of the actual consummation of the proposed pederastic relationship. The palinode could be understood as the first approach of a multi-stage operation with the final objective of subduing the ἐρώμενος' expected resistance to the ἐραστής' sexual advances. All the talk of resisting the sexual urge would be merely a ruse. This cynical reading is actually reinforced by the fact that Socrates seems to make allowances for those couples who would not be able to resist the urge. The ideal is to abstain, but to resist and fail is praised as a brave effort. This would then turn the palinode in a very interesting and peculiar text: a wooing speech in everything unlike traditional pederastic wooing speeches – except in the final and most desired outcome, sexual gratification. This would remove any declarative value from the palinode. Far from being an earnest attempt at describing ἔρως, the palinode would be just a heavily disguised and unconventional wooing speech, the worthy counterpart of Lysias' speech.

What all these elements bring to light is the intrinsically problematic and unstable status of the erotic speeches of the *Phaedrus*. It is impossible to tell what in them is meant

seriously and earnestly, and what is part of a rhetorical strategy or put forward with mere epideictic purposes. To damn them all as merely epideictic would be a mistake – but so it would be to take them all seriously, without any qualification. And even a reading that takes Lysias (with or without Socrates' first speech) as merely epideictic and the palinode (with or without Socrates' first speech) as earnest would be an oversimplification of the complex system used to undermine the status of the three speeches. In the end, as when walking through swampy terrain, the only thing we can do is thread lightly and carefully, doing our best to assure our next step will not make us lose our footing and sink down to our waist.

6. Aims of this study

This is the tricky and swampy terrain we will have to cross in our endeavour to understand the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition within the *Phaedrus*. The status of the erotic speeches and their peculiar relationship with the truth are an important factor to consider when trying to interpret their statements on the issues we are trying to shed light on. We believe that all these speeches, and especially when read against their cultural background, reveal important aspects of the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition. But the conventions of the epideictic genre, along with the peculiarities that arise from the specific dramatic setting and structure of the dialogue hide at least as much as they reveal. None of these texts are expositive or explanatory. Neither Lysias nor Socrates provides us with an exhaustive account of ἔρως, let alone μανία or φρονεῖν. That these erotic speeches are firmly grounded on and are an expression of different understandings of these phenomena is the main interpretative hypothesis of this study. We believe that the three erotic speeches are constituted and supported by a set of hidden assumptions regarding not only ἔρως, but also the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition. These assumptions do not apply simply to the relatively narrow and incidental scope of the erotic speeches, but should rather be understood as elements of differing anthropological models. In other words, these assumptions correspond to different ways of understanding human nature and condition, with particular emphasis on the role played by μανία and φρονεῖν.

This study will stand or fall insofar as it can be clearly shown that the erotic speeches can be read also as expressions of differing and rival conceptions of φρονεῖν and its opposite. They are not to be read as theoretical treatises, which they are not, but

as ways of indirectly expressing a set of particular understandings of these notions. They work as entry points to general conceptions on the phenomena we are trying to understand. The sequence of speeches itself is of particular importance. The assumptions of each of them will be object of revision by the following. As the analysis goes forward, we are able to look back and find assumptions that were previously hidden. We will give particular importance to how the speeches of the *Phaedrus* relate with different cultural traditions regarding the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition. We will try to show how the speeches of the *Phaedrus* elaborate on these traditions and introduce different ways of understanding and interpreting this opposition through variations on these traditional conceptions.

We will try to show that Lysias' speech and Socrates' first speech can be read as testimonies of a specific, well-defined conception of φρονεῖν, a conception of lucidity that is intrinsically linked with the commonly held beliefs of the community and the role an individual has to play within it. Accordingly, the conception of μανία at stake in these speeches will be shown to depend on that particular conception of φρονεῖν. It is against this particular conception that μανία is understood and defined. As such, μανία becomes the general designation of a variety of phenomena of disturbance and deviation from φρονεῖν. The association between the conception of φρονεῖν present in the first two speeches and the abilities, role and dignity of a citizen turns any greater departure from this model of citizen behaviour into a manifestation of μανία. Μανία, defined against a predominantly social conception of φρονεῖν, will be seen as a phenomenon that tears one away from the community, which makes him exist as if in a different world.

The palinode has a particularly important role to play in this regard. Although we cast doubts on the idea that it can settle all problems and doubts regarding these phenomena, in short, that it is Socrates' or Plato's last word on these subjects in the *Phaedrus*, we nonetheless recognise the particular relevance of this text. Its relevance is especially salient when we consider, as we will at length, the substantial modifications of perspective that the palinode is stage and setting to. We will try to show that what is set up in the palinode is a radical change of perspective from the points of view that prevailed in the previous speeches. We will try to show that this radical change can be understood as a departure from a conception of lucidity based on the belief on an apodictic link between lucidity and a commonly shared perspective. By severing this link, the palinode opens up the possibility of a different attribution of lucidity, based on a different set of

standards. The simple fact that this possibility is opened up is of great importance, greater even perhaps than the final settling on a specific conception of lucidity. What the palinode shows with impressive vigour is that lucidity can actually be problematic, that its definition and determination can be the subject of doubt. When this happens, the relatively tidy opposition between μανία and φρονεῖν becomes more and more confusing. One will not be able to understand μανία as the possibility that negates the social conception of φρονεῖν due to the simple fact that this social conception can no longer be endorsed acritically. By turning lucidity – or the ordinary attribution of lucidity – into a philosophical problem, the palinode disturbs the relatively uncontroversial opposition between μανία and φρονεῖν. The severance of the link between lucidity and the social conception of lucidity produces a diagnosis regarding the status of the perspective normally held. This perspective, deprived of its status as bearer of φρονεῖν, will be contrasted with an alternative perspective that can only be triggered through specific forms of disturbance. These forms of disturbance will no longer be understood as instances of μανία in the traditional sense, but rather as the igniters of a process of constitution of a φρόνιμος perspective.

Parallel to the aim of reading the *Phaedrus* in view of the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition, we have another related aim. This aim is to use the perspectives found in the *Phaedrus* to shed light on the phenomena at stake. Our primary hypothesis, sc. that the speeches are an expression of a set of perspectives on μανία and φρονεῖν, if confirmed by our analysis, will allow us to dig up elements that might help us understand this opposition a little better. This does not mean that what we are aiming at is a doxographic survey of the theses and assumptions present in the speeches, although a certain amount of doxography is indispensable in a work of this nature. What we are trying to do is rather to use the theses and assumptions found in the erotic speeches as windows through which we may get a glimpse of the phenomena at stake. It is clear that this glimpse will be limited and framed not only by the limitations of our point of view as interpreters of the text, but also by the limitations of the point of view of the author of the text and of whatever he chose to reveal to us. The limitations of an attempt of this kind have already been mentioned earlier in this chapter, and, all in all, it is impossible to decide if a specific path is correct before walking on it to the end. This is a task that is full of uncertainty. This uncertainty goes as far as to affect the pertinence of the text we have chosen as our map and the author we have chosen as our guide. It is possible that the perspectives on

μανία and φρονεῖν to be found in the *Phaedrus* distort the matter to such a degree as to completely miss the point. If that is the case, we will be as explorers with inaccurate and useless maps, completely lost. But the matter of the pertinence of these perspectives cannot be solved *a priori*. It is only after analysing and pondering them that we will perhaps be in condition to make such an assessment. For such an assessment to be possible, we will have to look beyond the doxographic elements and recognise them as attempts to describe phenomena. Our task will then be to follow these elements wherever they may lead us and try to have a look ourselves at what they are pointing at. This will mean that the Platonic perspectives will be read and interpreted in contrast with what we are able to grasp about the phenomena we are trying to understand. Their pertinence and their value for our purposes will depend on how successful we are in this attempt.

Chapter II
Before the Beginning: The Implicit Speech

Nous ne trouvons guère de gens de bon sens, que ceux qui sont de notre avis.
La Rochefoucauld, *Réflexions ou sentences et maximes morales, cinquième edition,* 341

In a study that is ostensively about one specific Platonic dialogue, it would be natural to begin by the beginning of that same dialogue. In the case of the *Phaedrus*, we would have to consider the dialogue's opening scene, its setting and the meaning of all the peculiarities that have occupied and fascinated readers and critics alike for centuries, and which may show *in nuce* many of the themes that will be developed later in the dialogue. We would then carry on by analysing and discussing Lysias' speech and the subsequent speeches, in order. The relatively straightforward structure of the first part of the *Phaedrus* (sc. until the end of the palinode) would make our work relatively easy: the opening scene is followed by the reading and production of speeches, with interludes discussing the speech that preceded them and motivating and setting the ground for the speech that follows at each time.

We have chosen, however, to do something different: to begin before the beginning. By this we mean that we will, before analysing the erotic speeches themselves, consider their cultural background. Our interest, however, is more than historical. One of the basic assumptions of our reading of the *Phaedrus* – one that we believe will be confirmed by our analysis – is that the different theses regarding ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν that constitute the erotic speeches are stated, developed and changed in dialogue, and debate not only with one another, but also with the cultural tradition from which they emerge. The cultural background therefore provides an important key for understanding the three erotic speeches. This cultural background not only precedes the speeches, but is also presupposed by them. Each of the speeches not only makes use of the arguments and ideas of the preceding speeches, but also refers back and employs many notions and ideas that are an integral part of this background. One may perhaps even go as far as to consider this cultural background as part of the sequence of speeches that constitute the first part

of the *Phaedrus*. It is, in a way, an implicit speech: a speech that is never uttered in the dialogue itself, but is presupposed by it and reacted to throughout the whole dialogue[30].

Our task at this moment is therefore to identify and understand the perspectives on ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν that constitute this implicit speech – and that echo and reverbarate through the explicit speeches of the *Phaedrus.* This task, however, is not without difficulties. The first difficulty has to do with with the implicit nature of this speech. The statements, theses, notions and assumptions that constitute the cultural background of the erotic speeches of the *Phaedrus* are not there explicitly for us to examine and take apart; they rather have to be dug out from the depths of Ancient Greek cultural tradition. This cultural tradition might have been as familiar to Plato and his contemporaries as the streets of their city or the landscape of their countryside, but to us it is a very different, alien culture, of which only fragments remain. The first difficulty of our task, then, is to reconstitute out of the fragments of an ancient and alien culture some kind of understandable and comprehensive view on the issues at stake.

This leads us to the second difficulty: the Greek cultural tradition, as we know it, is not only alien and fragmentary; it is also complex and multifaceted. Our access to the Ancient Greek culture has to be done through the works of a variety of authors, writing in different genres, different times, different places and social settings. This variety makes it very difficult, if not nigh impossible, to find and delineate a unanimous perspective on these phenomena. Ideally, we would be able to explore, describe and analyse the multiplicity of perspectives, of usages of the different notions we are trying to understand in exhaustive detail. This, however, would surpass the scope and intentions of this study,

[30] The other Platonic dialogue that is composed as a sequence of speeches by different speakers, the *Symposium*, presupposes a similar "implicit speech". This implicit speech corresponds to the traditional negative view of ἔρως, hinted at by the claimed absence of encomia of ἔρως in the Greek literary tradition (on the less than accurate nature of this claim, see BURY, R. G., *The Symposium of Plato*, Cambridge, W. Heffer and Sons, 1909, *ad locum*), to which the subsequent speeches are supposed to reply (177a-b). The *Phaedrus*, however, seems to be built in a different way. Whereas in the *Symposium* the epideictic challenge is stated from the very beginning, in reply to the negative view of ἔρως, in the *Phaedrus*, the epideictic challenge seems to be issued only after Lysias' speech. One might argue, however, that the epideictic rhetoric is characterised by an intrinsic competitiveness, which would mean that Lysias' speech, like any other epideictic speech, is already from the start the bearer of an *implicit* epideictic challenge. On the role of epideictic rhetoric in the *Symposium*, see NIGHTINGALE, A., The folly of praise, Plato's critique of encomiastic discourse in the Lysis and Symposium, *Classical Quarterly* 43 (1993), 112-130, and SHEPPARD, A., Rhetoric, Drama and Truth in Plato's *Symposium*, *The International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* 2 (2008), 28-40. On the competitive nature of epideictic rhetoric, see PRATT, J., The Epideictic Agon and Aristotle's Elusive Third Genre, American Journal of Philology 133 (2012), 177-208. This element of epideictic rhetoric is particularly noticeable in Isocrates' epideictic speeches, e.g., Helen and Busiris. See BEHME, T., Isocrates on the Ethics of Authorship, Rhetoric Review 23 (2004), 197-215.

and might even drown the arguments we will be trying to make in an ocean of scholarship. The best we can aim at is to identify general trends, together with certain specific and particularly relevant alternative perspectives.

But this requires selection – and this is our third difficulty. In selecting the perspectives, usages of the terms and the passages to illustrate them, we will never be safe from bias, not only because a lot will have to be left out, but also because we will be influenced by our own cultural and personal prejudices. We will try to at least be aware of these difficulties. If we choose to highlight certain aspects of the cultural presentation of these phenomena in detriment of others, our criterion is the dialogue with the speeches of the *Phaedrus*: we are trying to find theses that are somehow echoed, discussed or changed by the erotic speeches. Therefore, it makes sense to be guided by the subsequent speeches in our selection, not only in the perspectives that they argue against, but also in the perspectives that they somehow echo.

We will divide our treatment of the implicit speech in two parts. The first will be dedicated to the opposites that form the core object of our investigation: μανία and φρονεῖν. We will try to present an overall perspective on what the tradition understood as the φρόνιμος perspective – in opposition to μανία. We will illustrate how φρονεῖν was closely related with the socially shared perspective and how μανία corresponds to the opposite of that. We will also discuss the different models of understanding the phenomenon of μανία: endogenous and exogenous; and how these two models relate with φρονεῖν, understood as the socially accepted perspective. Furthermore, we will explore the semantic fields of φρονεῖν and μανία and the variety of shades of meaning that different related terms introduce to the understanding of these phenomena in the context of the Ancient Greek cultural tradition. Finally, we will show how the apparently perfect correspondence between φρονεῖν and the socially accepted perspective had already been problematised in tragedy, e.g., in Sophocles' *Antigone* and Euripides' *Bacchae*. This will show how the attribution of φρονεῖν, usually deemed to be peaceful and obvious, could nonetheless be understood and portrayed as a cause of perplexity.

The second part of our treatement of the implicit speech will concentrate on the phenomenon of ἔρως. Ἔρως is not the main object of our investigation, but it is nonetheless fundamental in the economy of the *Phaedrus*. It is through ἔρως that the notion of μανία is introduced; in a way, ἔρως is the foil of μανία. We will identify how

ἔρως, contrary to the modern notion of love, has a predominantly negative sense in ancient Greek culture. This is a controversial and contentious claim, but I hope the evidence will be persuasive enough. But, even if I fail in my attempt to prove this claim, it will be enough to persuade the reader of a weaker claim: that, in the economy of the *Phaedrus*, a certain predominantly negative perspective on ἔρως is presupposed. But even this weak claim cannot stand without an important restriction: an alternative, positive perspective on ἔρως plays a fundamental role in the *Phaedrus*. This perspective is παιδεραστία, which will occupy part of this chapter. We will show how παιδεραστία constitutes a revision of the negative aspects of ἔρως, put in a different light, and how dependent it is on a specific perspective on φρονεῖν. In other words: παιδεραστία presents itself as a φρόνιμος version of ἔρως.

1. The Μανία-Φρονεῖν Opposition

1.1. The multiple meanings and uses of φρονεῖν

The term φρονεῖν derives from the word φρήν. This word is very often used in the Homeric poems, usually in the plural: φρένες[31]. It designates what is conventionally called a "mental organ": the somatic seat of mental experiences and activities[32]. It is, in this respect, similar to words like ἦτορ, κῆρ, κραδίη[33] – not, though, to θυμός or νοῦς

[31] There are over 300 occurrences of this word in Homer. Homer also uses a synonym of φρένες, πραπίδες: *Iliad* 1.605, 11.575, 13.410, 17.345, 18.380, 18.480, 20.10, 22.40, 24.510; *Odyssey* 7.90, 8.545. For all occurrences see DARCUS SULLIVAN, S., *Psychological Activity in Homer*. A Study of phren, Ottawa, Carleton University Press, 1988.

[32] The term is used by, among others: SNELL, B., *Die Entdeckung des Geistes: Studien zur Entstehung des europäischen Denkens bei den Griechen* (4th ed.), Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975, 12ff; DODDS, E. R., *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1951, 16; HARRISON, E. L., Notes on Homeric Psychology, *Phoenix* 14 (1960), 63-80, 63.

[33] On the "physical" dimension of φρένες and other "mental organs" in Homeric and posthomeric Greek literature, see: ROGGE, C., Homerisch φρήν, φρένες und Verwandtes in neuer medizinischer und sprachpsychologischer Beleuchtung, Archiv für die gesamte Psychologie 58 (1927), 307-324; SNELL, *op. cit.*; ONIANS, R. B., The Origins of European Thought, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1951; SMITH, W. S., Physiology in the Homeric Poems, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 97 (1966), 547-556; IRELAND, S., STEEL, F., Φρένες as na Anatomical Organ in the Works of Homer, *Glotta* 53 (1975), 183-194; SNELL, B., φρένες – φρόνησις, *Glotta* 55 (1977), 36-64; CLAUS, D. B., *Towards the Soul: An Inquiry into the Meaning of Psyche before Plato*, New Haven (Conn.), Yale University Press, 1981; BREMMER, J., *The Early Greek Concept of the Soul*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1983; BIRAUD, M., La conception psychologique à l'époque d'Homère: les "organes mentaux". Étude lexicale de κῆρ, κραδίη, θυμός, φρένες, Cratyle 1 (1984), 27-49; SOLMSEN, F., Φρήν, Καρδία, Ψυχή, in: GERBER, D. E. (ed.), Greek Tragedy, Greek Poetry and Philosophy. Studies in Honour of Leonard Woodbury, Chico (Cal.), Scholar Press, 1984, 265-274; THALMANN, W. G.

(νόος in its Homeric form)[34]. All of these, as φρένες, designate parts of the human body, but are very often referred to in contexts where they are either (1) affected by what we would call emotions and thoughts, or (2) the places from which emotions and thoughts originate or where they take place. The relationship between these mental activities and experiences and the "mental organs" is far from clear. To say that the boundaries between the physical and the mental in Homer are not clearly established would be an understatement. The mental activities and experiences are identified with what the mental organs do or go through. Φρένες is the most commonly mentioned of these organs, and also the one whose activities and experiences seem to be the most varied. Φρένες are the seat of planning and decision-making, in many cases influenced and determined by the intervention of a god. Φρένες are the seat of knowledge and understanding. Φρένες are affected and moved by different emotions and experiences: courage, fear, wrath, pain, pleasure or desire, to name just a few. Φρένες can be divided in purpose or intention. Φρένες can be changed, moved and turned through persuasion. Φρένες can be taken away, destroyed, affected by war rage, by ἄτη[35]. Φρένες can also be used in a strictly physical sense, as the organ that is struck by a spear in battle[36]. But this physical use is overwhelmed by the instances in which the "mental" sense of φρένες comes to the forefront. In this, it differs substantially from ἦτορ, κῆρ or κραδίη, which, even when used in connection to mental experiences and activities, keep a strong physical meaning. In this respect, it resembles more θυμός and νόος. But the somatic sense of these two terms is less clear: they do not seem to correspond to organs as such, but to specific bodily functions. Φρένες, therefore, is in a unique situation: it has a clear somatic meaning, but

Aeschylus' Physiology of Emotions, *American Journal of Philology* 107 (1986), 489-511; PADEL, R., *In and Out of the Mind*. Greek Images of the Tragic Self, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994, 12ff.; MEGINO RODRIGUEZ, C., *El pensamiento de Homero sobre la realidad psicologica en la Iliada*. Seis conceptos fundamentales: ΘΥΜΟΣ, ΦΡΗΝ, ΝΟΟΣ, ΗΤΟΡ, ΚΗΡ y ΚΡΑΔΙΗ, Madrid, UAM, 2002.

[34] Although they are not, strictly speaking, "mental organs", θυμός and νοῦς still have a somatic dimension, at least in what regards their etymology. See FRITZ, K. von, ΝΟΟΣ and ΝΟΕΙΝ in the Homeric Poems, *Classical Philology* 38 (1943), 79-93; JAEGER, W., The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1947, 82; ONIANS, *op. cit.*, 44-49; HARRISON, *op. cit.*, 65-66; CASWELL, C. P., *A Study of Thumos in Early Greek Epic*, Leiden/New York, Brill (Supplements to *Mnemosyne*), 1990. However, according to Harrison, "in Homeric epic νόος and θυμός have now left any such basic notions behind".

[35] Planning and decision-making: *Iliad* 1.55, 3.108, 8.218, 9.418, 9.434, 10.4, 11.411, 16.435, 21.61; *Odyssey* 3.133, 5.365, 9.301, 14.337. Knowledge and understanding: *Iliad* 1.295, 2.33, 2.70, 4.39, 5.406, 6.447, 8.365, 8.446, 9.610, 14.92, 16.444, 20.310, 21.94, 24.563; *Odyssey* 1.420, 4.633, 2.116, 4.260, 5.20, 7.110, 8.168, 8.556, 8.559, 15.210, 17.449. Emotions: *Iliad* 1.103, 2.241, 3.443, 6.355, 10.121, 13.280, 14.221, 15.61, 15.627, 16.61, 20.380, 21.45, 24.105; *Odyssey* 1.89, 4.661, 4.814, 4.825, 8.368. Divided φρένες: *Iliad* 2.3; 5.670, 8.169, 21.386; *Odyssey* 1.427, 2.93, 4.117, 16.74, 20.10. Persuasion: *Iliad* 4.104, 6.61, 7.120, 12.173; *Odyssey* 14.290. These are just a few examples and this list is by no means exhaustive.

[36] *Iliad* 16.403, 16.482, 16.504.

it assumes more and more a mental connotation, to the point where it is mostly used to designate "mental activities". It is also unique because it is only word for a mental organ that originates a verb that designates mental activities: φρονεῖν.

Φρονεῖν seems to have inherited the varied and versatile nature of φρένες[37]. But, as a verb, what seems to be emphasised is the activity itself, rather than the organ that

[37] On the notion of φρονεῖν and its correlates, including νοεῖν, see, for example: HELBIG, K. G., Dissertatio de vi et usu vocabulorum φρένες, θυμός similiumque apud Homerum, Dresden, Gaerner, 1840; JEBB, R. C., (ed.) *Sophocles The Plays and Fragments* I. The Oedipus Tyrannus, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1883, ad 326; IDEM, *Sophocles The Plays and Fragments* II, The Oedipus Coloneus, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1885, ad 270, 1741; IDEM, *Sophocles The Plays and Fragments* IV, The Philoctetes, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1890, ad 818, 1099ff.; IDEM, *Sophocles, The Plays and Fragments* III, The Antigone, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1891, ad 1031f; IDEM, *Sophocles The Plays and Fragments* V, Tachiniae, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1892, ad 311ff., 404; IDEM, *Sophocles The Plays and Fragments* VII, The Ajax, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1896, ad 183ff.; ROHDE, E., *Psyche*. Seelencult und Unsterblichkeitsglaube der Griechen, vol. 1, Tübingen, Mohr, 1910, 44ff.; PEARSON, A. C., *The Fragments of Sophocles*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1917, ad Fr. 91, 108, 524, 677, 836; MAGNIEN, V., Quelques mots du vocabulaire exprimant des operations ou des états de l'âme, *Revue des Études Grecques* 40 (1927), 117-141; LOEW, E., Die Ausdrücke φρονεῖν und νοεῖν bei den Vorsokratikern, *Philologische Wochenschrift* 49 (1929), 426-429 & 491-495; BOEHME, J., *Die Seele und das Ich im Homerischen Epos*, Leipzig, Teubner, 1929; LAROCK, V., Les premières conceptions psychologiques des Grecs, *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 9 (1930), 377-406, especially 365ff.; JUSTESEN, P., *Les principes psychologiques d'Homère*, Copenhagen, Justesen, 1928, 1ff.; KITTO, H. D. F., *Greek Tragedy*. A Literary Study, London, Methuen, 1939, 146; PFISTER, F., Ekstasis, in: T. KLAUSER et al. (ed.), *Pisciculi*. Studien zur Religion und Kultur des Altertums, Franz Joseph Dölger zum sechzigsten Geburtstage dargeboten, Münster i.W., Aschendorff, 1939, 178-191; FRITZ, K. von, ΝΟΟΣ and NOEIN in the Homeric Poems, *Classical Philology* 38 (1943), 79-93; IDEM, ΝΟΥΣ, NOEIN, and their Derivatives, Part I, *Classical Philology* 40, 223-242, 1945; IDEM, ΝΟΥΣ, NOEIN, and their Derivatives, Part II, *Classical Philology* 41, 12-34, 1946; SNELL (1975), 26, 296, 301; FRAENKEL, E. (ed.), *Aeschylus Agamemnon*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1950, ad 176, 182f., 739, 997; ONIANS, *op. cit.*, 13ff., 20, 23f., 32, 66f., FRÄNKEL, H., *Wege und Formen frühgriechischen Denkens*, München, Beck, 1955, 3rd rev. ed., München, Beck, 1968, 28f., 31, 174ff.; HANDLEY, E. W., Words for Soul, Heart and Mind in Aristophanes, *Rheinisches Museum* 99 (1956), 205-225; VIVANTE, P., Sulle designazioni omeriche della realtà psichica, *Archivio Glottologico Italiano* 41 (1956), 113-138; WEBSTER, D. B., Some Psychological Terms in Greek Tragedy, *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 77 (1957), 149-154; DODDS, E. E. (ed.), *Euripides Bacchae*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1960, ad 266-269, 310-312, 359; HÜFFMEIER, F., Phronesis in den Schriften des Corpus Hippocraticum, *Hermes* 89 (1961), 51-86; PEARSON, L., *Popular Ethics in Ancient Greece*, Stanford, 1962, 51ff., 71ff., 223ff.,; HAVELOCK, E. A., HAVELOCK, E., *Preface to Plato*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1963, 212f.; STANFORD, W. B. (ed.), *Sophocles Ajax*, London, Macmillan, 1963, ad 81, 344, 416-417, 542, 746, 1330-1331; BARRETT, W. S. (ed.), *Euripides Hippolytos*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1964, ad 1401; LOCKHART, P., Φρονεῖν in Homer, *Classical Philology* 61 (1966), 99-102; O'BRIEN, M., *The Socratic Paradoxes and the Greek Mind*, Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1967, 40ff.; ADKINS, A., *From the Many to the One*. A Study of Personality and Views of Human Nature in the Context of Ancient Greek Society, Values and Beliefs, Ithaca (N.Y.), Cornell University Press, 1970, 14f., 19f., 33, 47f., 197ff., 202f.; BERTRAM, G., Φρήν, ἄφρων, ἀφροσύνη, φρόνησις, φρονεῖν, φρόνημα, φρόνιμος, in: KITTEL, G., FRIEDRICH, G. (ed.), *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, vol. IX, Stuttgart/Berlin, Kohlhammer, 1973, 216-231; DOVER, K., *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle*, Berkeley/L.A., University of California Press, 1974, 126ff.; SANSONE, D., *Aeschylean Metaphors for Intellectual Activity*, Wiesbaden, Steiner, 1975, 13, 20, 22ff., 82f.; KAHN, C., *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus*. An Edition of the Fragments with Translation and Commentary, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979, 29, 41, 43, 101f., 107, 119; CHEYNS, A., La notion de φρένες dans l'Iliade et d'Odyssée, I, *Cahiers de l'Institut de linguistique de Louvain* 6 (1980), 121-202; CLAUS, *op. cit.*, 16ff, 48ff., 54; LESHER, J. H., Perceiving and Knowing in the "Iliad" and "*Odyssey* ", *Phronesis* 26 (1981), 2-24; PIGEAUD, J., *La Maladie de l'âme*. Étude sur la relation de l'âme et du corps dans la tradition

acts or suffers. Φρονεῖν can mean to think or to know, referring to a specific content of one's mind: it designates the activity of the φρένες in the cognitive sense[38]. But it also means to have a specific purpose or intention, i.e., the activity of the φρένες in their capacity as the seats of planning and decision-making[39]. This is, so to speak, a primarily "ethical" meaning. Another use of the verb φρονεῖν in a peculiar grammatical construction can also be included in the "ethical" aspect of the term. In phrases like ἀγαθὰ φρονεῖν, κακὰ φρονεῖν, φίλα φρονεῖν, θνητὰ φρονεῖν, μέγα φρονεῖν, among others, the accusatives do not denote objects of thought or knowledge, as the literal translation might suggest, but rather attitudes and behaviours towards something: being well or ill disposed, for example, towards someone, or being friendly[40]. Translated literally, these phrases would indicate specific thought contents: to think good thoughts, bad thoughts, etc. But

médico-philosophique antique, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1981, 73ff.; EASTERLING, P. E. (ed.), *Sophocles Trachiniae*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982, 227ff.; BREMMER, *op. cit.*, 51, 55, 61ff.; GOLDHILL, S., *Reading Greek Tragedy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986, 132ff., 135, 168ff., 175, 192f.; PADEL, *op. cit.*, 18ff.; EADEM, *Whom Gods Destroy*. Elements of Greek and Tragic Madness, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1995, 13f., 27f., 34, 36f., 44, 104f., 128, 169, 232. Particulary noteworthy are the works of S. DARCUS SULLIVAN: DARCUS, S., Νόος Precedes φρήν in Greek Lyrical Poetry, *L'Antiquité Classique* 46 (1977), 41-51; EADEM, -phrôn Epithets of "thumos", *Glotta* 55 (1977), 178-182; EADEM, The φρήν of the νόος in Xenophanes' God, Symbolae Osloenses 53 (1978), 25-30; EADEM, A Person's Relation to φρήν in Homer, Hesiod and the Greek Lyric Poets, *Glotta* 57 (1979), 159-173; DARCUS SULLIVAN, S. (=EADEM), The Nature of phren in Empedocles, in: CAPASSO, M., ROSATI, F. de (ed.), *Studi di filosofia prePlatonica*, Napoli, Bibliopolis, 1985, 234-250; EADEM, An Analysis of φρένες in Greek Lyric Poetry (Excluding Pindar and Bacchylides), *Glotta* 61 (1988), 26-62; EADEM, *Psychological Activity in Homer*. A Study of phren, Ottawa, Carleton University Press, 1988; EADEM, A Study of φρένες in Pindar and Bacchylides, *Glotta* 67 (1989), 148-189; EADEM, Phrenes in Hesiod, *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 67 (1989), 5-17; EADEM, The Mind and the Heart of Zeus in Homer and the Homeric Hymns, *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 37 (1994), 101-126; EADEM, The Removal of Psychic Entities in Early Greek Poetry, *Eos* 82 (1994), 189-199; EADEM, *Psychological and Ethical Ideas*. What Early Greeks Say, Leiden, Brill, 1995; EADEM, Disturbances of the Mind and the Heart in Early Greek Poetry, *L'Antiquité Classique* 65 (1996), 31-51; EADEM, Metaphorical Uses of Psychological Terminology in Early Poetry: Evidence for Distinctive Meanings of the Terms, *Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica* 14 (1996), 129-151; EADEM, *Aeschylus' Use of Psychological Terminology*. Traditional and New, Montreal/Kingston, McGill-Queen´s University Press, 1997; EADEM, *Sophocles' Use of Psychological Terminology*. Old and New, Ottawa, Carleton University Press, 1999; EADEM, *Euripides' Use of Psychological Terminology*, Montreal/Kingston, McGill-Queen´s University Press, 2000; EADEM, Phren and Planning: Pindar, Nemean 1. 27, *Prometheus* 27 (2001), 211-216.

[38] See, e.g., HOMER, *Iliad* 9.310; 14.195 = 18.426 = *Odyssey* 5.8; HERODOTUS 1.46.16 (of oracles); HERACLITUS, DK 113B; PARMENIDES, DK 16B; SOPHOCLES, *Antigone* 49-52, *Trachiniae* 289, *Oedipus Coloneus* 872-873; ARISTOPHANES, *Pax* 1128-1129, *Aves* 119.

[39] See, e.g., *Iliad* 3.98, 5.564, 8.430, 9.310,15.603, 17.225; AESCHYLUS, *Agamemnon* 221; HERODOTUS 7.205.18, 6.97.8, 1.77.4.

[40] Ἀγαθὰ φρονεῖν: HOMER, *Iliad* 6.162, 23.305, 24.173, *Odyssey* 1.43; THUCYDIDES 2.22. Κακὰ φρονεῖν: HOMER, *Iliad* 22.264, 7.70, 10.486, 16.373, 16.783, *Odyssey* 10.317, 17.596, 18.232, 20.5; PINDAR, *Pythia* 8.82. Φίλα φρονεῖν: HOMER, *Iliad* 4.219, 5.116, *Odyssey* 7.15, 7.42, 16.17, Euripides, *Andromacha* 146, *Medea* 819. Θνητὰ φρονεῖν: AESCHYLUS, *Persae* 820, SOPHOCLES, *Ajax* 777, *Trachiniae* 473, EURIPIDES, *Alcestis* 799. Μέγα φρονεῖν: HOMER, *Iliad* 8.553, 11.296, 11.325, 12.67, 13.156, 16.258, 16.824, 22.21; HERODOTUS, 7.10.55; THUCYDIDES 6.16.4.2; SOPHOCLES, *Ajax* 1088, *Antigone* 479, EURIPIDES, *Andromacha* 1008, *Electra* 1120.

in this case, the accusatives function as adverbs, qualifying the verb[41]. These two aspects, intellectual and ethical, show φρονεῖν in its dual nature. The primary intellectual meaning is, in many cases, neutral regarding the truth of cognitive content referred to. When φρονεῖν means to think or know something, in an intellectual sense, the verb itself says nothing about it being right or wrong. In itself, φρονεῖν means, for example, to think or to know, not to think rightly or wrongly. Those are additional determinations. Something similar happens in many instances of φρονεῖν in the ethical sense. In the phrases φρονεῖν plus accusative, or φρονεῖν plus adverb or adverbial expression, the positive or negative determination is introduced by the accusative and the adverb. The verb remains neutral. The same happens when φρονεῖν is used, in Homer and elsewhere, to indicate a deliberation, a wish or an intention.

However, there is a meaning of φρονεῖν in which it acquires an intrinsically positive connotation: when it means to be wise or prudent[42]. This is eloquently and succinctly expressed by Democritus: "γίνεται δὲ ἐκ τοῦ φρονεῖν τρία ταῦτα· βουλεύεσθαι καλῶς [sc. εὖ λογίζεσθαι, according to the scholiast], λέγειν ἀναμαρτήτως καὶ πράττειν ἃ δεῖ" (DK 2B). Φρονεῖν is said to express itself not simply in the fact that there is deliberation, speech and action, but *good* deliberation, *correct* speech and in acting as one *must*. Φρονεῖν includes in its own definition the idea of correctness. The wise or prudent is the one who is able to think and act correctly. This is a wisdom that is not limited to propositional knowledge. It is not just a matter of thinking X and X corresponding to a true state of affairs. This is a wisdom that recognises what one ought to do and not do in life. Φρονεῖν then becomes more than just to think: it is to think correctly. It becomes more than just to have a specific intention or will or attitude or feeling towards something or someone: it determines that it is correct. This is a meaning of the word φρονεῖν in which the two aspects, intellectual and ethical are fused together. The beauty of Democritus' characterisation of φρονεῖν resides not in the fact that three activities mentioned – βουλεύεσθαι, λέγειν, πράττειν – correspond to three different aspects of φρονεῖν, but rather in the fact that the two aspects we have identified so far, intellectual

[41] Using an adverb instead of an accusative makes little or no difference, as, for example, in the case of κακῶς φρονεῖν: AESCHYLUS, *Agamemnon* 927, *Eumenides* 850; SOPHOCLES, *Electra* 325, 550; EURIPIDES, *Hercules* 1426, *Medea* 464, 892.

[42] See, e.g., AESCHYLUS, *Supplices* 176-177, 204; SOPHOCLES, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 617; EURIPIDES, *Alcestis* 565, *Andromacha* 647, *Hecuba* 228, *Hippolytus* 920, *Supplices* 734-735.

and ethical, are intrinsically connected in each of these activities. In each of them, the intellectual and the ethical component play a fundamental part.

This dual nature is not an exclusive of the term φρονεῖν; rather, it seems to be a general characteristic of Ancient Greek culture, observed, for example, also in the verb νοεῖν. This is often seen by scholars as a problem – and the solution for this problem is often found in attributing primacy to one of the aspects, the "intellectual" one, over the other. This consists in positing that the intellectual meaning is the "original" meaning, from which the ethical meaning is derived. It is further stated that this derivation means that the Ancient Greek understanding of human actions and behaviour is one that stresses the role of knowledge, to the exclusion of the faculty we know as "will". It is often noted that this constitutes a specific characteristic of Ancient Greek culture, quite alien from our own, commonly known as "Greek intellectualism"[43]. The wicked is also foolish; the wise is also good. And, according to the intellectualist interpretation, the wicked is wicked because he is foolish, and the good is good because he is wise[44]. That there is an intrinsic connection between these two aspects seems clear. What is far from clear, though, is that this connection is of the nature proposed by the intellectualist interpretation. The thesis that the original meaning is the intellectual one cannot be proved, since in our earliest source, the Homeric poems, terms like φρένες, φρονεῖν, and their cognates already exhibit a dual nature, often difficult to differentiate. It is impossible to tell which one of the meanings is the primary one or if there is such a thing as a primary meaning at all. Rather, the two meanings are mingled in such a way that their distinction is only noticeable through reflexion. The difference between intellectual and ethical collapses, showing us there is a common core where both these aspects are fused together. These two categories are foreign to this world. It is not just because the ethical φρονεῖν describes feelings, attitudes and behaviour, which depend on knowledge, but it is also because the border between feelings, attitudes, behaviour and knowledge is often blurred. The distinction between intellectual and ethical is not intrinsic, but rather imposed by an interpretation

[43] See WUNDT, M, *Der Intellektualismus in der Grieschischen Ethik*, Leipzig, 1907; NESTLE, W, Intellektualismus und Mystik in der Grieschischen Philosophie, *Neue Jahrbücher für das Klassische Altertum* 49 (1922), 137-157; SNELL, Das Frühste Zeugnis über Sokrates, *Philologus* 97 (1948), 125-134; DODDS (1951).

[44] Probably the most extreme example of this tendency can be found in the Platonic Socrates himself. This is particularly noticeable in the Socratic tendency to reduce the traditional virtues to applications of knowledge. This is expressed, for example, in the Socratic paradox: "virtue is knowledge". See *Gorgias* 460b6-7; *Protagoras* 360d3; cf. SANTAS, G., The Socratic Paradoxes, *Philosophical Review* 73 (1964), 147-164. O'BRIEN, *op. cit*., 23ff., however, argues that Greek intellectualism is "a myth".

based on a mode of thinking that takes that distinction for granted. From our modern point of view, the distinction seems clear, and we become baffled when the two aspects are merged together in the same word.

Thinking and acting correctly, however, does not necessarily imply the possession of a special skill, limited to a few gifted individuals. In many instances, φρονεῖν becomes the word for a state of mind – reflected in behaviour – that is correct, accurate and healthy – in a word: normal. Φρονεῖν is to be in a state of normality, in all its variety of aspects. Φρονεῖν is the normal situation. It is, as lucidity usually is, obvious. In this sense, the affirmation of φρονεῖν is usually associated with a situation in which φρονεῖν is questioned or in doubt. It is when φρονεῖν is lacking, or suspected or accused of being lacking that it acquires the sense of being lucid or sane. It is only either through reflexion or as a result of some kind of failure that the status of one's perspective is brought to the foreground. In a situation where the attribution of φρονεῖν is not the object of, at the very least, suspicion, one cannot even say that it is claimed as the status of everyday perspective, because to claim something, one has to be aware of it. It is more like a silent assumption. Due to the tendency to consider lucidity as the default setting of one's perspective, the transition from "thinking" or "having something in mind" to "thinking correctly" or "having something in mind that is true" is not that abrupt. Recognizing that what one thinks is incorrect is the rare exception, not the rule. Recognizing that the incorrectness of a thought is derived from a distorted perspective and not from some circumstancial error is even rarer. In other words, the question of the status of one's perspective is not even raised. It is this silent and apparently obvious nature of φρονεῖν that makes it so difficult to understand. It only comes to the forefront when it is confronted with its disturbance.

The extreme version of this disturbance is to be found in μανία. It is in contrast with μανία that φρονεῖν as lucidity reveals itself. Μανία and related phenomena illuminate φρονεῖν by contrast, as, for example, in this passage of Sophocles' *Ajax* (81-82):

> Αθ. μεμηνότ' ἄνδρα περιφανῶς ὀκνεῖς ἰδεῖν;
> Οδ. φρονοῦντα γάρ νιν οὐκ ἂν ἐξέστην ὄκνῳ.

Later in this tragedy, φρονεῖν will be used to refer to Ajax' recovery from his insanity attack:

Χο. ἀνὴρ φρονεῖν ἔοικεν.
(Sophocles, *Ajax*, 344)

The state of being lucid, however, can also be expressed by using the phrase εὖ φρονεῖν or the equivalent καλῶς and ὀρθῶς φρονεῖν, instead of simply the verb, thereby reinforcing the idea of correctness, of being able to see things as they really are, and, as well, the idea of proper and correct behaviour[45].

Ηλ. ἄκουε δή νυν, ὦ κασίγνητον κάρα,
ἕως σ' ἐῶσιν **εὖ φρονεῖν** Ἐρινύες.
(Euripides, *Orestes*, 237-238)

Φε. ὦ δαιμόνιε, τί χρῆμα πάσχεις, ὦ πάτερ;
οὐκ εὖ φρονεῖς, μὰ τὸν Δία τὸν Ὀλύμπιον.
(Aristophanes, *Nubes*, 816-817)

In a context where lucidity or the lack thereof is in question, the use of the verb φρονεῖν, with or without the adverbs εὖ and equivalents, is enough to denote the state of being lucid, and the use of the verb in the negative to denote the opposite[46].

οὕτως ἐξεπλάγησαν μὴ διὰ τὸ γῆρας ἐξεστηκὼς ὦ τοῦ φρονεῖν ὥστ' ἐτόλμησαν ἐπιπλῆξαί μοι πρότερον οὐκ εἰωθότες τοῦτο ποιεῖν
(Isocrates, *Phillipus* 18.1-3)

πάλαι δέδορκα, μὴ σύ γ' οὐκέτ' εὖ φρονῇς.
(Euripides, *Electra* 568)

As a term, φρονεῖν has a quite diverse usage, with many different emphases and connotations. These are often expressed through the use of different prefixes. Some of these prefixes express that one is in possession of φρονεῖν, in particular the prefix εμ-:

[45] Examples of εὖ φρονεῖν: HERODOTUS, 2.16.2, 8.60.25, 8.142.22; AESCHYLUS, *Prometheus Vinctus* 385, SOPHOCLES, *Electra* 394, *Antigone* 755, 904, *Ajax* 491, 746; EURIPIDES, *Ion* 518, *Hercules* 272, *Troiades* 400; ARISTOPHANES, *Nubes* 562, 817; LYSIAS, Ὑπὲρ τῶν Ἀριστοφάνους χρημάτων 41.2. Καλῶς φρονεῖν: AESCHYLUS, *Persae* 725, *Prometheus Vinctus* 1012; SOPHOCLES, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 600, *Trachiniae* 442; Euripides, *Hippolytus* 1318. Ὀρθῶς φρονεῖν: AESCHYLUS, *Prometheus Vinctus* 1000; SOPHOCLES, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 550; EURIPIDES, *Iphigenea in Tauris* 1476 The phrase εὖ φρονεῖν in Homer is used with an exclusively "ethical" meaning – having good intentions: *Iliad* 1.73, 1.253, 2.78, 2.283; *Odyssey* 2.160, 2.227, 7.158, 16.399, 24.453. A few instances of this meaning can also be found in tragedy: AESCHYLUS, *Agamemnon* 271, 1436, *Choeforoi* 774; EURIPIDES, *Alcestis* 210, *Andromacha* 146, *Iphigenea in Aulide* 353, *Medea* 824.

[46] See, for example: SOPHOCLES, *Electra* 889-890, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 629, 691; EURIPIDES, *Helen* 575, *Hercules* 1121-1122, *Hippolytus* 1318, *Iphigenea in Aulide* 870, *Medea* 1129, *Electra* 567-568, *Orestes* 238; ARISTOPHANES, *Nubes* 816-819; ISOCRATES, *Phillipus*, 18.2; ISAEUS, *De Menecle*, 43, 14, 19.

Τε. ἡμεῖς τοιοίδ’ ἔφυμεν, ὡς μὲν σοὶ δοκεῖ,
μῶροι, γονεῦσι δ’, οἵ σ’ ἔφυσαν, **ἔμφρονες**.
(Sophocles, Oedipus Rex, 435-436)

Τοσοῦτον δὲ διήνεγκαν ἀνοίᾳ πάντων ἀνθρώπων ὥστε τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους αἱ συμφοραὶ συστέλλουσι καὶ ποιοῦσιν **ἐμφρονεστέρους**, ἐκεῖνοι δ’ οὐδ’ ὑπὸ τούτων ἐπαιδεύθησαν.
(Isocrates, *De pace*, 85)[47]

This prefix is often contrasted with the prefix of negation α- to denote that one is indeed in possession of φρονεῖν, e.g., after having recovered from a bout of insanity. Another prefix, derived from the adjective ἄρτιος, suggests the idea of perfection, completeness or suitability.

καί μοι τοῦτ’ ἀγόρευσον ἐτήτυμον, ὄφρ’ ἐὺ εἰδῶ,
εἰ ἐτεόν γ’ Ἰθάκην τήνδ’ ἱκόμεθ’, ὥς μοι ἔειπεν
οὗτος ἀνὴρ νῦν δὴ ξυμβλήμενος ἐνθάδ’ ἰόντι,
οὔ τι μάλ’ **ἀρτίφρων**, ἐπεὶ οὐ τόλμησεν ἕκαστα
εἰπεῖν ἠδ’ ἐπακοῦσαι ἐμὸν ἔπος, ὡς ἐρέεινον
ἀμφὶ ξείνῳ ἐμῷ, ἤ που ζώει τε καὶ ἔστιν,
ἦ ἤδη τέθνηκε καὶ εἰν Ἀΐδαο δόμοισιν.
(Homer, *Odyssea*, 24.258-264)

χρὴ δ’ οὔποθ’ ὅστις **ἀρτίφρων** πέφυκ’ ἀνὴρ
παῖδας περισσῶς ἐκδιδάσκεσθαι σοφούς·
(Euripides, *Medea*, 294-295)[48]

The opposition between μανία and φρονεῖν is most obvious with the use of the prefixes α-, εκ- and παρα-, to denote deprivation and distortion of φρονεῖν. Εκ- seems to be the rarer of the prefixes used with φρονεῖν, being mainly used in prose, especially in the Hippocratic Corpus[49]. The prefix α-, the *alpha privativum*, indicates the absence of φρονεῖν[50].

Ὣς φάτ’ Ἀθηναίη, τῷ δὲ φρένας **ἄφρονι** πεῖθεν·
(Homer, *Iliad*, 4.104)

[47] Examples of ἔμφρων: AESCHYLUS, *Prometheus Vinctus* 848, *Choephoroi* 1026; SOPHOCLES, *Ajax* 306, *Antigone* 1237; EURIPIDES, *Ion* 553, *Iphigenea in Tauris* 315, *Orestes* 44.
[48] See also: AESCHYLUS, *Septem contra Thebas* 778; EURIPIDES, *Iphigenea in Aulide* 877.
[49] Examples in the Hippocratic Corpus: *De morbis* 3.3.4, 3.9.3, 3.9.5, *De morbis popularibus* 5.1.106.1, 7.1.21.1.
[50] See also, e.g.: HOMER, *Iliad* 3.220, 5.761, 7.110, 11.389, 23.12, 24.157, 24.186; *Odyssey* 6.187, 8.209, 17.589, 21.102, 23.12; THEOGNIS, 1.223, 1.454, 1.497, 1.665, 1.1039; HESIOD, *Opera et Dies* 210; AESCHYLUS, *Persae* 782, *Eumenides* 377; Sophocles, *Antigone* 383, *Electra* 941; EURIPIDES, *Alcestis* 728, *Helena* 1151, *Hercules* 758, *Hippolytus* 164, *Iphigenea in Aulide* 489, *Iphigenea in Tauris* 574, *Medea* 885, *Phoenissae* 1647; HERODOTUS 3.146.3, 9.82.18; THUCYDIDES 1.123.1.1, 6.33.1.4.

ἀλλ', ὦ τῆς ἡλικίας ἡμῖν τῆς αὐτῆς συνθιασῶτα,
πιθοῦ πιθοῦ λόγοισι, μηδ' **ἄφρων** γένῃ
μηδ' ἀτενὴς ἄγαν ἀτεράμων τ' ἀνήρ.
(Aristophanes, *Vespae*, 728-730)

Παρα-, on the other hand, suggests deviation from or distortion of φρονεῖν[51].

ἐγὼ γὰρ οἶμαι πολλῷ μᾶλλον τοῦτον παραφρονεῖν τῷ τε λόγῳ τούτῳ ᾧ νυνὶ λέγει, καὶ οἷς πολιεῖ.
(Isaeus, *De Menecle* 26)

Τρ. τί τόδ' αὖ **παράφρων** ἔρριψας ἔπος;
νῦν δὴ μὲν ὄρος βᾶσ' ἐπὶ θήρας
πόθον ἐστέλλου, νῦν δ' αὖ ψαμάθοις
ἐπ' ἀκυμάντοις πώλων ἔρασαι.
(Euripides, *Bacchae*, 232-235)

This kind of construction, prefix + φρονεῖν, is taken to exuberant heights by this passage from Homer:

τὴν δ' αὖτε προσέειπε **περίφρων** Πηνελόπεια·
"μαῖα φίλη, μάργην σε θεοὶ θέσαν, οἵ τε δύνανται
ἄφρονα ποιῆσαι καὶ **ἐπίφρονά** περ μάλ' ἐόντα,
καί τε **χαλιφρονέοντα σαοφροσύνης** ἐπέβησαν·
οἵ σέ περ ἔβλαψαν· πρὶν δὲ φρένας αἰσίμη ἦσθα
(Homer, *Odyssea*, 23.10-14)

The first word, περίφρων, is a common designation of Penelope: the wise or prudent Penelope[52]. After this, we find two pairs of contrasting terms, the term meaning the absence or weakness of φρονεῖν, ἄφρων and χαλίφρων, followed by the term denoting the presence and health of φρονεῖν, ἐπίφρων and σαοφροσύνη. Ἐπίφρων and χαλίφρων are very rarely used; χαλίφρων is specifically Homeric. But σαοφροσύνη, in its most common form, σωφροσύνη, is a word with a very important history and particularly relevant for our purposes. It indicates that one's φρένες are sound, in a state of health. But

[51] See also: HIPPOCRATES, *De morbis popularibus* 1.4.3, 1.4.9, 1.4.10; HERODOTUS, 1.109.6, 3.34.11, 3.35.13; AESCHYLUS, *Septem contra Thebas* 806; EURIPIDES, *Electra* 472, *Hippolytus* 232; ARISTOPHANES, *Ecclesiazusae* 250, 1001, *Nubes* 844, 1475, *Plutus* 2, *Ranae* 1499, *Vespae* 8; ISOCRATES, *De pace* 41.5, 103.5; ISAEUS, *De Cleonymo* 20, 21, *De Menecle* 20, 25, 40, 43.
[52] See also: *Odyssey* 1.329, 4.787, 4.808, 4.830, 5.216, 11.446, 14.373, 15.41, 15.314, 16.329, 16.409, 16.435, 17.36, 17.100, 17.162, 17.492, 17.498, 17.528, 17.553, 17.562, 17.585, 18.159, 18.177, 18.245, 18.250, 18.285, 19.53, 19.59, 19.89, 19.103, 19.123, 19.308, 19.349, 19.375, 19.553, 19.588, 20.388, 21.2, 21.311, 21.321, 21.330, 23.58, 23.80, 23.104, 23.173, 23.256, 23.285, 24.404.

what the soundness of one's φρένες might be can be understood in several ways. As with φρονεῖν, σωφροσύνη can have an intellectual or an ethical meaning. But, whereas the use of φρονεῖν as the opposite of μανία tends to fuse the two aspects together, the notion of σωφροσύνη seems to have acquired a more specialised sense: self-control, the ability to master one's impulses and desires. In a society that privileged moderation, σωφροσύνη tends to relate to the notion of good behaviour, of following the rules, of not doing anything excessive or transgressive – all of these determinations that are also associated with the notion of φρονεῖν as lucidity[53]. The intellectual meaning, however, was never completely lost, and it is also used in several instances as of φρονεῖν as lucidity, especially in opposition to the excessive behaviour that is often considered to be μανικός.

> Ιων **εὖ φρονεῖς** μέν; ἤ σ' ἔμηνεν θεοῦ τις, ὦ ξένε, βλάβη;
> Ξο. **σωφρονῶ**, τὰ φίλταθ' εὑρὼν εἰ φιλεῖν ἐφίεμαι;
> (Euripides, *Ion* 520-521)

> Ελ. **μανέντ'**; ἐπεὶ τίς **σωφρονῶν** τλαίη τάδ' ἄν;
> (Euripides, *Helena* 97)

In poetic language, the disturbances of φρονεῖν can be expressed as disturbances of one's φρένες. Φρένες can be taken away:

> ἔνθ' αὖτε Γλαύκῳ Κρονίδης **φρένας ἐξέλετο** Ζεύς,
> ὃς πρὸς Τυδεΐδην Διομήδεα τεύχε' ἄμειβε
> χρύσεα χαλκείων, ἑκατόμβοι' ἐννεαβοίων.
> (Homer, *Iliad*, 6. 234-236).

They can be entangled:

> ἀλλ' εἰ δή ῥα τότε **βλάπτε φρένας** εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς
> ἡμετέρας, νῦν αὐτὸς ἐποτρύνει καὶ ἀνώγει.
> (Idem, 15.724-725).

[53] Σωφροσύνη as "soundness of mind" reveals how the two aspects, intellectual and ethical, are intrinsically mingled together. The fact that, in the Classical period, σωφροσύνη comes to mean primarily good behaviour and self-control does not detract from the intellectual aspect of the notion. It can rather be interpreted as a testament to the importance of the use of the simple term φρονεῖν to denote the state of not being mad or otherwise disturbed, emphasizing the behavioural aspect. Not exhibiting the behaviour associated with σωφροσύνη is a sign of lack of lucidity, even if the term is mainly used to denote the behaviour, not the state of mind. See DE VRIES, Σωφροσύνη en Grec Classique, *Mnemosyne* 11 (1943), 81-101; NORTH, H. F., *Sophrosyne*. Self-Knowledge and Self-Restraint in Greek literature, Ithaca, N. Y., Cornell University Press, 1966. See also p. 91ff., chapter III, p. 243ff., n. 192.

They can be cast off or expelled:

μή νύν ποτ', ὦ παῖ, **τὰς φρένας** γ' ὑφ' ἡδονῆς
γυναικὸς οὕνεκ' **ἐκβάλῃς**
(Sophocles, *Antigone*, 648-649).

Or they can wander or stray:

Μέντορ ἀταρτηρέ, **φρένας ἠλεέ**, ποῖον ἔειπες
ἡμέας ὀτρύνων καταπαυέμεν.
(Homer, *Odyssea*, 243-244)

They can also be displaced, taken out of where they should be:

τεισώμεθ' αὐτόν. πρῶτα δ' **ἔκστησον φρενῶν**,
ἐνεὶς ἐλαφρὰν λύσσαν·
(Euripides, *Bacchae*, 850-851.)

But they also can be striken:

τάδε μαντείας ἄξια πολλῆς,
ὅστις σε θεῶν ἀνασειράζει
καὶ **παρακόπτει φρένας**, ὦ παῖ.
(Idem, 236-238)

Finally, they can simply be destroyed:

εἰ δ' ἐτεὸν δὴ τοῦτον ἀπὸ σπουδῆς ἀγορεύεις,
ἐξ ἄρα δή τοι ἔπειτα θεοὶ **φρένας ὤλεσαν** αὐτοί.
(Homer, *Iliad*, 7.350-360).

Φρονεῖν is also related to the notions of νοῦς, and especially the phrase νοῦς ἔχειν or νοῦς ἔνεστι. These phrases are often used to denote that one is lucid, fulfilling the role of a synonym of φρονεῖν. As such, it is also often contrasted with μανία.

Πα. ὦ πλεῖστα μῶροι καὶ φρενῶν τητώμενοι,
πότερα παρ' οὐδὲν τοῦ βίου κήδεσθ' ἔτι,
ἢ **νοῦς ἔνεστιν** οὔτις ὑμὶν ἐγγενής,
ὅτ' οὐ παρ' αὐτοῖς ἀλλ' ἐν αὐτοῖσιν κακοῖς
τοῖσιν μεγίστοις ὄντες οὐ γιγνώσκετε;
(Sophocles, *Electra*, 1326-1330)

ἀλλ' εἰ μέν τι τῶν ἄλλων κτημάτων πολλοστοῦ μέρους τῆς ἀξίας ἐπώλουν,
οὐκ ἂν ἠμφισβήτησαν ὡς οὐκ εὖ φρονοῦντες τυγχάνουσιν, σύμπασαν δὲ τὴν

ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν οὕτως ὀλίγου τιμῶντες, ὡς **νοῦν ἔχοντες** διδάσκαλοι τῶν ἄλλων ἀξιοῦσιν γίγνεσθαι.
(Isocrates, *In sophistas*, 4)

ἡ μὲν γὰρ ὡς ἀληθῶς μήτηρ, ἡ τεκοῦσ᾽ αὐτόν, πλεῖστον ἁπάντων ἀνθρώπων **εἶχε νοῦν**, ἡ δὲ δοκοῦσα καὶ ὑποβαλομένη πασῶν ἦν ἀνοητοτάτη γυναικῶν.
(Demosthenes, *In Midiam*, 149)

As a virtual synonym of φρονεῖν, νοῦς, when used to denote lucidity, e.g., as in the phrase νοῦν ἔχειν, can also be modified by prefixes to denote μανία, namely α- and παρα-.[54]

ἦν δὲ διὰ τέλους ἀκούσητέ μου προσέχοντες τὸν νοῦν, οἶμαι πάντας ὑμᾶς καταγνώσεσθαι πολλὴν **ἄνοιαν** καὶ **μανίαν** τῶν τὴν ἀδικίαν πλεονεξίαν εἶναι νομιζόντων καὶ τῶν τὰς ἀλλοτρίας πόλεις βίᾳ κατεχόντων καὶ μὴ λογιζομένων τὰς συμφορὰς τὰς ἐκ τῶν τοιούτων ἔργων γιγνομένας.
(Isocrates, *De pace*, 17)

τὸ δεύτερον δὲ τὴν **ἄνοιαν** εὖ φέρειν
τῶι σωφρονεῖν νικῶσα προυνοησάμην
(Euripides, *Hippolytus* 398-399)

Ὥστ᾽ εἰ καὶ ἡμεῖς ὁμολογήσαιμεν ταῦτα καὶ ὑμεῖς αὐτοὶ πιστεύσαιτε, ἐνθυμεῖσθε ὅτι **παράνοιαν** αὐτοῦ τὴν μεγίστην οὗτοι κατηγοροῦσι.
(Isaeus, *De Cleonymo* 19)

Φε. οἴμοι· τί δράσω, **παραφρονοῦντος** τοῦ πατρός;
πότερον **παρανοίας** αὐτὸν εἰσαγαγὼν ἔλω,
ἢ τοῖς σοροπηγοῖς τὴν **μανίαν** αὐτοῦ φράσω;
(Aristophanes, *Nubes*, 844-846)

Alongside with words that indicate the absence of or deviation from φρονεῖν or νοῦς, we find others that denote different types and forms of manic events and behaviours. These words will point out to different ways of understanding and explaining these events and behaviours, which will be the object of a subsequent section.

[54] Ἄνοια: AESCHYLUS, *Prometheus Vinctus* 1079, *Septem contra Thebas* 402; SOPHOCLES, *Antigone* 99, 281, 562, 603, *Ajax* 763, *Electra* 1054; EURIPIDES, *Andromacha* 519, *Hecuba* 640, *Bacchae* 345; ARISTOPHANES, *Equites* 350, 515, *Archanenses* 736; THUCYDIDES, 2.61.1, 3.42.1, 5.111.4, 6.16.3, 6.17.1, 6.89.6. Παράνοια: AESCHYLUS, *Septem contra Thebas* 756; EURIPIDES, *Iphigenea in Aulide* 838, *Orestes* 824; ARISTOPHANES, *Nubes* 1476, 1480; ISAEUS, *De Cleonymo* 50.

Firstly, we will deal with μανία itself, in particular with its verbal form, μαίνεσθαι. The passive form of the verb seems to suggest the passivity of the phenomenon. In fact, as we shall see in greater detail in the subsequent section, μανία is most often described as something one suffers, not something one does. It may entail actions and behaviours, but these are often understood as arising from a state that is itself the result of an action by another force. It is, at any rate, something that one has no control over. The idea of μανία as passive is strongly suggested by the use of the term in the *Iliad*. The most common use of the word is to describe events of what we could call battle rage[55]. It is often applied to warriors showing superhuman strenght, bravery and ferocity[56]. But it is also used to describe the behaviour of gods in battle, especially Ares[57], showing the same kind of ferocity. The mortals displaying this kind of behaviour are understood as having been inspired with their superhuman strength and ferocity, μένος, by one of the gods. This makes them surpass the limits of human condition and fight even more bravely and boldly than usual. As such, they can be compared with the gods themselves: as Hector explicitly is at 15.605. The association between μανία and μένος has already been the object of scholarly interest[58], especially the fact that is has to be breathed into the warrior. It is not the result of a deliberate action from the warrior. The warrior does not decide to μαίνεσθαι. It is rather something that is given to him. Hector killing Patroclus is might be an action on the part of Hector, but it is the result of a state that is been produced in him, to which he is passive. But the word μανία acquired meanings beyond its Homeric sense

[55] See FINEBERG, S., Blind Rage and Eccentric Vision in *Iliad* 6, *Transactions of the American Philological Society* 129 (1999), 13-41. The only exceptions to this are, according to Fineberg, the figures of Andromache (6.389), Anteia (6.169) and Dionysus, (6.132). See also O'BRIEN-MOORE, A., *Madness in Ancient Literature*, Weimar, Wagner, 1924, 71 n. 2; MAURI, Funzione e lessico della follia guerriera nei poemi omerici, Acme 43 (1990), 51-62; MARTÍNEZ CONESA, J. A., Las perturbaciones mentales en los poemas homéricos, *Myrtia* 7 (1992), 81-101; PADEL (1995), 19ff.; PERDICOYIANNI-PALÉOLOGOU, H., The vocabulary of madness from Homer to Hippocrates. Part 1: The verbal group of μαίνομαι, *History of Psychiatry* 20 (2009), 311-339. See also: MARTÍNEZ CONESA, J. A. / CORBERA LLOVERAS, M. A., El campo semántico de las perturbaciones mentales en la tragedia griega: Esquilo, in: E. CASANOVA/J. ESPINOSA CARBONELL (ed.), *Homenatge a J. Belloch Zimmermann*, València, Universitat, Facultat de Filologia, 1988, 259-266; MARTÍNEZ CONESA, J. A., El campo semántico de las perturbaciones mentales en la tragedia griega: Sófocles, in: I. ROCA/J. L. SANCHIS (ed.), *Homenatge a J. Esteve Forriols*, València, Universitat, 1990, 59-66; MARTÍNEZ CONESA, J. A., Las perturbaciones mentales en el Corpus hippocraticum. El concepto de μανία, *Saitabi* 41 (1991), 111-123; IDEM, La perturbación mental expresada con φρήνες y μανία en las tragedias di Eurípides, *Helmantica* 44 (1993), Thesauramata philologica Iosepho Orozio oblata, 37-49;

[56] Applied to Diomedes: 5.185, 6.100-101, 8.111 (more specifically, his spear), 16.74-75; to Hector: 8.355, 9.238, 15.605, 21.5; to Achilles: 24.114, 24.135 (not strictly a battle context, but the continuation of the battle rage as the result of his grief for the loss of Patroclus); to Patroclus: 16.245.

[57] Applied to Zeus: 8.60; to Athena and Hera: 8.413; to Ares: 5.717, 5.831, 15.128, 15.606; regarding Ares, see also *Od.* 11.537.

[58] DODDS (1951), 10.

of battle rage. In general terms, it designates a disturbance of the mind, often manifested through an odd and extravagant behaviour[59]. With the word μανία, we can observe a process that is common to other words denoting disturbances of φρονεῖν: a word that designates a specific kind of disturbance, is then used to designate the more general phenomenon.

There are several other terms that, to a certain extent, can be used as its synonyms, designating events and phenomena of insanity or lack of lucidity. Λύσσα seems to be virtually interchangeable with μανία, often being used in pleonastic constructions, to reinforce the meaning[60]:

> Ἕκτωρ δὲ μέγα σθένεϊ βλεμεαίνων
> **μαίνεται** ἐκπάγλως πίσυνος Διί, οὐδέ τι τίει
> ἀνέρας οὐδὲ θεούς· κρατερὴ δέ έ **λύσσα** δέδυκεν.
> (Homer, *Iliad*, 9.237-239)

> τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος γόνον ἐάσατ' ἐκ-
> λαθέσθαι **λύσσας μανιάδος** φοιταλέου.
> (Euripides, Orestes, 325-326)

It is also remarkable that Λύσσα is the name of a character in Euripides' *Heracles*: it is Madness itself, who, lead by Iris and under the command of Hera, is forced, against her will to attack Heracles and make him kill his wife and children[61].

> Λυ. Ἥλιον μαρτυρόμεσθα δρῶσ' ἃ δρᾶν οὐ βούλομαι.
> εἰ δὲ δή μ' Ἥραι θ' ὑπουργεῖν σοί τ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχει,
> εἶμί γ'· οὔτε πόντος οὕτω κύμασι στένων λάβρος
> οὔτε γῆς σεισμὸς κεραυνοῦ τ' οἶστρος ὠδῖνας πνέων
> οἷ' ἐγὼ στάδια δραμοῦμαι στέρνον εἰς Ἡρακλέους·
> καὶ καταρρήξω μέλαθρα καὶ δόμους ἐπεμβαλῶ,
> τέκν' ἀποκτείνασα πρῶτον· ὁ δὲ κανὼν οὐκ εἴσεται
> παῖδας οὓς ἔτικτεν ἐναρών, πρὶν ἂν ἐμὰς λύσσας ἀφῇι.
> (Euripides, *Heracles*, 858-865)

Another virtual synonym of μανία, or, to be more precise, of μαινόμενος or

[59] On the possible causes and origins of μανία, see section 1.4 below.
[60] See ERNOUT, A., Λύσσα. *Revue de Philologie*, 58 (1949), 154-156; LASSO de la VEGA, J., Sobre la etimologia de λύσσα, *Emerita* 20 (1952), 32-34; LINCOLN, B., Homeric λύσσα: Wolfish Rage, *Indogermanische Forschungen* 80 (1975), 98-105; PADEL (1992), 125; EADEM (1995), 17ff.; PERDICOYIANNI-PALÉOLOGOU, H., The vocabulary of madness from Homer to Hippocrates. Part 2: The verbal group of βακχεύω and the noun λύσσα, *History of Psychiatry* 20 (2009), 457-467.
[61] EURIPIDES, *Heracles*, 822-874.

μανικός, is μάργος. This is a poetical term, very rarely found in prose.

Ἀντίνο᾽, ὕβριν ἔχων, κακομήχανε, καὶ δέ σέ φασιν
ἐν δήμῳ Ἰθάκης μεθ᾽ ὁμήλικας ἔμμεν ἄριστον
βουλῇ καὶ μύθοισι· σὺ δ᾽ οὐκ ἄρα τοῖος ἔησθα.
μάργε, τίη δὲ σὺ Τηλεμάχῳ θάνατόν τε μόρον τε
ῥάπτεις
(Homer, *Odyssea*, 16.418-422)

Αμ. φυγὰν φυγάν, γέροντες, ἀποπρὸ δωμάτων
διώκετε· φεύγετε **μάργον**
ἄνδρ᾽ ἐπεγειρόμενον.
(Euripides, *Heracles*, 1082-1084)

Μωρία is another mostly poetical synonym of μανία, though the emphasis seems to be more on foolishness than on frenzy or rage.

σοὶ δ᾽ εἰ δοκῶ νῦν **μῶρα** δρῶσα τυγχάνειν,
σχεδόν τι **μώρῳ μωρίαν** ὀφλισκάνω.
(Sophocles, *Antigone*, 469-470)

ἐγὼ δέ γ᾽ ἄνδρ᾽ ὄπωπα μωρίας πλέων,
ὃς ἐν κακοῖς ὕβριζε τοῖσι τῶν πέλας.
(Sophocles, *Ajax*, 1150-1151).

Another term related to μανία is οἶστρος[62]. Though the most concrete meaning of this word is "gadfly", it seems that it has evolved into a synonym of madness. The observation of the effect of the sting of the gadfly on cattle seems to have caused this change in the meaning of the word.

δὴ τότ᾽ Ἀθηναίη φθισίμβροτον αἰγίδ᾽ ἀνέσχεν
ὑψόθεν ἐξ ὀροφῆς· τῶν δὲ φρένες ἐπτοίηθεν.
οἱ δ᾽ ἐφέβοντο κατὰ μέγαρον βόες ὣς ἀγελαῖαι·
τὰς μέν τ᾽ αἰόλος **οἶστρος** ἐφορμηθεὶς ἐδόνησεν
ὥρῃ ἐν εἰαρινῇ, ὅτε τ᾽ ἤματα μακρὰ πέλονται·
(Homer, *Odyssea*, 22. 297-231)

The fear and confusion of the suitors is compared with cattle that have been stung by the gadfly. Similarly, Io, turned into a cow, is tormented by a οἶστρος. She is said to

[62] PADEL (1992), 120ff.; EADEM (1995), 14ff.

run away in a state described as "ἀμαρτίνοος", a rare word composed of ἁμαρτία, error, and νοῦς:

παλαιὸν δ' εἰς ἴχνος μετέσταν,
ματέρος ἀνθονόμους ἐπωπάς,
λειμῶνα βούχιλον, ἔνθεν Ἰὼ (540)
οἴστρωι ἐρεσσομένα
φεύγει **ἁμαρτίνοος**
πολλὰ βροτῶν διαμειβομένα
φῦλα, διχῆι δ' † ἀντίπορον
γαῖαν ἐν αἴσαι † διατέμνουσα πόρον (545)
κυματίαν ὁρίζει.
(Aeschylus, *Supplices*, 538-546).

Soon it came to designate any kind of intense and uncontrollable urge or impulse, like sexual desire:

ἀλλ' ἐς τόδ' ἦλθον, παιδὸς ἐκδεῖξαι φρένα
τοῦ σοῦ δικαίαν, ὡς ὑπ' εὐκλείας θάνηι,
καὶ σῆς γυναικὸς **οἶστρον** ἢ τρόπον τινὰ (1300)
γενναιότητα. τῆς γὰρ ἐχθίστης θεῶν
ἡμῖν ὅσαισι παρθένειος ἡδονὴ
δηχθεῖσα κέντροις παιδὸς ἠράσθη σέθεν·
(Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 1298-1303).

But, in a more general sense, it came to mean frenzy or madness:

τοιγάρ νιν αὐτὰς ἐκ δόμων **ὤιστρησ'** ἐγὼ
μανίαις, ὄρος δ' οἰκοῦσι παράκοποι φρενῶν,
σκευήν τ' ἔχειν ἠνάγκασ' ὀργίων ἐμῶν.
καὶ πᾶν τὸ θῆλυ σπέρμα Καδμείων, ὅσαι
γυναῖκες ἦσαν, ἐξέμηνα δωμάτων·
(Euripides, *Bacchae*, 32-36).

Several other terms seem to have suffered a similar evolution in meaning, from designating a specific phenomenon, often seen as insane or incompatible with lucidity, to having a more general sense of madness or insanity. One of these terms is ἐνθουσιασμός along with its corresponding adjective, ἔνθεος[63]. The original etymological meaning

[63] See ROHDE, *op. cit.*, II 4, II 19ff.; DELATTE, A., Les Conceptions de l 'Enthousiasme chez les Philosophes Présocratiques , *L'Antiquité Classique* 3, 1934, 5-79; DODDS (1951), 66f., 82ff., 101; CALVO MARTÍNEZ, J. L., Sobre la manía y el entusiasmo, *Emerita* 41 (1973), 157-182; PADEL (1995), 40, 126-129. On the notion of possession, see also: SMITH, W., So-Called Possession in Pre-Christian Greece, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, 96 (1965), 403-426.

seems to have been "having a god within", in the sense of being taken over by a god, to be possessed by a god. But it can also sometimes be used as a general term for madness.

αὐτὸς δ' ἐπηλάλαξεν, **ἔνθεος** δ' Ἄρει
βακχᾶι πρὸς ἀλκήν, θυιὰς ὥς, φόβον βλέπων.
(Aeschylus, *Septem contra Thebas*, 497-498)

Τα. **ἐνθουσιᾶις**, δύστηνε, τοῖς σαυτῆς κακοῖς.
(Euripides, *Troiades*, 1284)

We can witness a similar change in meaning with the term βακχεύειν[64]. The most basic and original meaning is to celebrate bacchic rites, the rites in honour of Dionysus. Thus, from being frenzied and completely at odds with normal, sober, behaviour, the meaning of the verb widened to the point of being used as a synonym of μανία.

Σκύθαι δὲ τοῦ **βακχεύειν** πέρι Ἕλλησι ὀνειδίζουσι· οὐ γάρ φασι οἰκὸς εἶναι θεὸν ἐξευρίσκειν τοῦτον ὅστις **μαίνεσθαι** ἐνάγει ἀνθρώπους.
(Herodotus, 4.79)

ἀντιτύπᾳ δ' ἐπὶ γᾷ πέσε τανταλωθεὶς
πυρφόρος ὃς τότε **μαινομένᾳ** ξὺν ὁρμᾷ
βακχεύων ἐπέπνει
ῥιπαῖς ἐχθίστων ἀνέμων.
(Sophocles, *Antigone*, 134-137)
οἷον ἔργον τελέσας
βεβάκχευται μανίαις,
Εὐμενίσι θήραμα, φόβον
δρομάσι δινεύων βλεφάροις,
Ἀγαμεμνόνιος παῖς.
(Euripides, *Orestes*, 834-838)

Μελαγχολία[65] is another term the meaning of which has also widened to encompass madness in general. It is originally a medical term found in the c*orpus hippocraticum*.

[64] See DODDS (1951), 278; PADEL (1995), 28ff.
[65] MUERI, W., Melancholie und schwarze Galle, *Museum Helveticum* 10 (1953), 21-38; KLIBANSKY, R., PANOFSKY, E., SAXL, F., *Saturn and Melancholy*, London, Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1964; FLASHAR, H., *Melancholie und Melancholiker in den medizinischen Theorien der Antike*, Berlin, de Gruyter, 1966; SIMON, B., *Mind and Madness in Ancient Greece*. The Classical Roots of Modern Psychiatry, Ithaca, NY, Cornell Univ. Pr., 1978; GARCÍA GUAL, C., Del melancólico como atrabiliario. Según las antiguas ideas griegas sobre la enfermedad de la melancolia, *Faventia* 6 (1984), 41-50; PADEL (1992), 23ff..; EADEM (1995), 48ff.; THUMIGER, C., The Early Greek Medical Vocabulary of Insanity, in HARRIS, W. (ed.), *Mental Disorders in the Classical World*, Leiden, Brill, 2013, 61-95.

Τοῦ μὲν γὰρ ἦρος, τὰ μανικὰ, καὶ τὰ μελαγχολικὰ, καὶ τὰ ἐπιληπτικὰ, καὶ αἵματος ῥύσιες, καὶ κυνάγχαι, καὶ κόρυζαι, καὶ βράγχοι, καὶ βῆχες, καὶ λέπραι, καὶ λειχῆνες, καὶ ἀλφοὶ, καὶ ἐξανθήσιες ἑλκώδεες πλεῖσται, καὶ φύματα, καὶ ἀρθριτικά.
(Hippocrates, *Aphorismi,* 3.20)

Literal meaning "black bile", it refers to the Hippocratic theory of humours, which explained the operations of the body and its diseases as the result of the balance and inbalance of the four humours. Μελαγχολία was understood as the excess of black bile, a specific disease, characterized by a prolonged state of fear and sadness:

Ἢν φόβος ἢ δυσθυμίη πουλὺν χρόνον διατελέῃ, μελαγχολικὸν τὸ τοιοῦτον.
(Idem, 6.23).

As another deviation from the normal state of φρονεῖν, this term was eventually adopted outside of medical terminology as a synonym of μανία:

Πρ. φήσω **παραφρονεῖν** αὐτόν.
Γυ. α. ἀλλὰ τοῦτό γε
ἴσασι πάντες.
Πρ. ἀλλὰ καὶ **μελαγχολᾶν.**
Γυ. α. καὶ τοῦτ᾽ ἴσασιν.
(Aristophanes, *Ecclesiazusae,* 250-252)

Ὀλυμπιόδωρος μὲν οὑτοσὶ τοιοῦτός ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος, οὐ μόνον ἄδικος, ἀλλὰ καὶ **μελαγχολᾶν** δοκῶν ἅπασιν τοῖς οἰκείοις καὶ τοῖς γνωρίμοις τῇ προαιρέσει τοῦ βίου, καὶ ὅπερ Σόλων ὁ νομοθέτης λέγει, **παραφρονῶν** ὡς οὐδεὶς πώποτε **παρεφρόνησεν** ἀνθρώπων, γυναικὶ πειθόμενος πόρνῃ.
(Demosthenes, *In Olympiodorum,* 56).

1.2. Being φρόνιμος: good behaviour, sovereignty, happiness, civic dignity

All these linguistic variations on the term φρονεῖν, however, do not yet show us what specific determinations characterised the deformalisation of the notion of lucidity that was peculiar to the Ancient Greek culture. Φρονεῖν, as lucidity, will consist of the specifically Greek way of understanding reality, and of the Greek conception of what normal behaviour is. In other words, what we are going to do next is to present a rough sketch of what, from a Greek perspective, normality, be it the normal understanding of reality, or normal behaviour, would be. Since φρονεῖν, understood as lucidity, consists in

the ability of seeing reality as it really is, and behaving accordingly, φρονεῖν is seen as being the default setting of one's perspective. The normal, everyday perspective is commonly held has being characterized by φρονεῖν, only to be disturbed and radically altered in exceptional circumstances. Disturbance is the exception, not the rule. But the normal perspective is not determined individually. It is rather dependent on a set of complex socially constructed theses.

Φρονεῖν is not simply an individual attribute, but a characteristic shared by a specific community. The fact that no one lives alone, that everyone is part of a wider community means that there is little chance of building up a perspective that is completely autonomous, wholly defined by one's personal, isolated experiences. Being part of a community implies being influenced and even determined by the views that same community holds. Be it through language, religion or customs, every single person is moulded by the society of which they are part. This is particularly visible in small communities, especially small communities whose struggle for survival employs most of their members and which exercise a high degree of social control. Such seems to have been the case of the small settlements that populated ancient Greece. These being relatively small communities, the sense of belonging, of being with one's fellow citizens is something that is physically real, something tangible. This was reinforced with all sorts of rituals, festivities and customs that seem to have been designated to make this sense of belonging even stronger. And, in spite of all their complexity and their intellectual sophistication, ancient Greek communities were vulnerable to all sorts of existential risks, from the ones caused by a bad crop to the ones that arise from hostile and overreaching neighbours. The shared perception of danger reinforces the sense of community, the sense that one needs to be part of a community in order to survive. In these circumstances, the role of the community as the landscape of one's life becomes even more salient. It is where life happens. One meets one's neighbours outside one's home, one talks with them, trades with them, one helps and is helped by them, one shares with them the fundamental decisions regarding their shared life. This interdependence makes it fundamental to be part of the community, but it also reinforces the influence and power the community has over each of its members. In a culture where community life is so highly valued, the idea of being alone in possession of φρονεῖν, in opposition to the community one is part of is manifestly absurd:

μή νυν ἓν ἦθος μοῦνον ἐν σαυτῷ φόρει,
ὡς φὴς σύ, κοὐδὲν ἄλλο, τοῦτ᾽ ὀρθῶς ἔχειν.
ὅστις γὰρ αὐτὸς ἢ φρονεῖν μόνος δοκεῖ,
ἢ γλῶσσαν, ἣν οὐκ ἄλλος, ἢ ψυχὴν ἔχειν,
οὗτοι διαπτυχθέντες ὤφθησαν κενοί.
(Sophocles, *Antigone*, 705-709)

Φρονεῖν is, in this sense, fundamentally a social phenomenon. It is something shared with one's countrymen, every one of them – except the disturbed. "Φρονεῖν μόνος δοκεῖ" implies the presumption of putting one's recognition of reality, one's judgement of how one should act and how one should not, above the collective wisdom of the society one is part of. The adoption of a perspective at odds with the socially shared values of one's society leads to a severing of the ties with one's contemporaries. The socially shared perspective is something one finds already formed, something one inherits from one's ancestors. Being at odds with this perspective, therefore, severs one's ties also with one's past, and, potentially, with all those yet unborn that will be part of that same community. The individual in that situation will be alone, in the most radical sense of the word: completely cut off from society. One has to be accepted by the community in order to exist, but also in order to have a fully developed life.

Rejection by the community is tantamount to death, even if it does not necessarily entail actual physical death. It is the community that shapes the life of its members. It is the community that builds the perspectives and views of its members, by endorsing some views and rejecting others, by adopting certain habits and customs and not others, by tolerating specific behaviours and punishing others. This leads to the building up of a social shared perspective. This socially shared perspective is elastic enough to include individual perspectives that might deviate from it up to a point, but is powerful enough not only to determine everyone inside it, but also to reject those that wander too far beyond its limits. The establishment of these limits will result in the association between following the rules of society and being sane, as opposed with disobedience and insanity. Those who do not follow the rules, since they are the result of a socially shared perspective that, by default, is considered to be correct, can be understood as being affected by some kind of insanity. From this one does not need to go very far in order to conclude that those who most seriously go against the rules of conduct of a society can only be insane:

Οὕτω δ’ ἂν ἀκριβέστατα συνθεωρήσαιτε τὸ τοῖς κειμένοις νόμοις πείθεσθαι ἡλίκον ἀγαθόν ἐστιν, καὶ τὸ καταφρονεῖν καὶ τὸ μὴ πειθαρχεῖν αὐτοῖς ἡλίκον κακόν, εἰ τά τ’ ἐκ τῶν νόμων ἀγαθὰ χωρὶς καὶ τὰ διὰ τῆς παρανομίας συμβαίνοντα πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς ποιησάμενοι θεωρήσαιτε. εὑρήσετε γὰρ τὴν μὲν τὰ τῆς μανίας καὶ ἀκρασίας καὶ πλεονεξίας, τοὺς δὲ τὰ τῆς φρονήσεως καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ δικαιοσύνης ἔργα διαπραττομένους.

(Demosthenes, *In Aristogitonem II*, 25)

In this sense, to be φρόνιμος or σώφρων is to be well behaved. It consists in following the rules, in doing what is expected of you, in not displaying any transgressive behaviour.

But, from a Greek perspective, the community, the πόλις, is more than just the guarantee of one’s survival and an instrument of social control. It is, perhaps above all else, the venue where free men can exercise sovereign power over themselves individually, and collectively over the community as a whole. It is the stage where free men can exercise their abilities, where they can act. Through debating and speech-making, through deliberation and decision-making, in battle or in the law court, in the assembly and in religious festivals, each citizen has the right and the duty to contribute to the utmost of his ability to the power, freedom and prosperity of the πόλις.

By working for the πόλις, by competing to do his best, each citizen shows his worth, and gains the respect and admiration of his fellow citizens. The πόλις might be a demanding mistress, but it is not an alien entity exercising power over each individual. Each citizen is a constitutive part of the πόλις, and is entitled to influence the collective actions. By being part of the πόλις, each citizen partakes in its sovereignty, even if, as law-abiding members of the community, they are also subject to it. The subjects and the sovereigns are, in part, the same. The sovereigns are the citizens, a restricted group within the πόλις. In the case of a democracy like Athens, this restricted group is relatively numerous, though it still excludes the majority of the population. Women, children, slaves and foreign residents are merely subjects, not partakers in sovereignty. In the case of women, children and slaves, they are under the individual control of the male head of their families, the husband, father, older brother, the master, the κύριος. The citizen, therefore, exercises power not only collectively in the political sphere, but also individually within his house. To be a citizen is to have power over others, and not to be subjected to the power of others, except that of the citizen body as a whole, of which each citizen is a part. But power entails responsability, and the exercise of power over others

demands ability. To be a good citizen, to be entitled to partake in exercising sovereignty over others, it is required, above all else, that one is capable of exercising sovereignty over oneself. In a society that valued self-control and moderation, to display strong emotions, and be controlled by them is a sign of deviation from φρονεῖν.

The φρόνιμος is capable of controlling himself, of keeping himself in check, of resisting the urges and desires that might make him tread away from the path of acceptable behaviour[66]. Φρονεῖν implies being in control of oneself, to be the decisive element in one's own actions and behaviour. It implies resistance to and rejection of the power of emotions and desires as the determinant factors. Odd behaviour and words, wild mood swings, extreme emotions, or actions that were in complete contravention of what was considered good and proper were taken as signs of lack of φρονεῖν. They are all signs of an inability to conform to the rules, understood as originating from an inability to control oneself. One fails to conform to the obviously correct and reasonable demands of one's community because one becomes the subject of the powers that one must subjugate: desires and emotions. This accounts for the relationship between φρονεῖν and σωφροσύνη. Not only this relationship is etymological, but also, in many cases

[66] There are other factors of disturbance of φρονεῖν. These might not be considered forms of μανία, *stricto sensu*, but they are associated with it insofar as they are seen as forms of abnormal and transgressive behaviour and as causes of obscurity and confusion. A prominent example of a disturbance of φρονεῖν that is not *stricto sensu* μανία is ἐλπίς. Commonly translated as hope or expectaction, ἐλπίς, in contrast with our notion of hope, had a usual negative connotation in ancient Greek culture. It was seen as the deceitful expectation that made one expect the best outcome of a situation, even if that was not likely. It might be φρόνιμος to tone down one's expectation or even, in more dire circumstances, realise that one is lost and try to make the best of it. But, by expecting a good outcome, one is lead into a trap. One grabs oneself to that ἐλπίς and, lead by it, loses one's way (Sophocles, *Antigone* 615-625). Wine is another factor of disturbance of φρονεῖν. Drinking wine to excess has already been mentioned as a possible cause of the madness of king Cleomenes. But, in that case, it was the continued habit of drinking wine without mixing water that was considered to have resulted in his insanity. Wine, even mixed with water, was commonly seen, as it is today, as causing odd and uninhibited behaviour and as interfering with one's ability to see clearly. This is represented by the god Dionysus, also known as Baccus, as the god of frenzy and socially transgressive behaviour. The verb βακχεύω could mean to perform the rites of Bacchus, but was also a term for madness. Excessive consumption of wine leads to drunkenness, which can be understood as an analogue of μανία (Homer, *Odyssey* 21.298). Other disturbances of φρονεῖν include anger, fear and pleasure. Fear and anger interfere with the normally calm and clear perspective of φρονεῖν and cause substantial changes in one's normal behaviour. Although being afraid might, in some circumstances, be appropriate and even beneficial, fear has the ability to overcome any form of calm or rational deliberation. The one who is affected by fear looses control over himself, and acts in ways that, in many circumstances, are actually putting him at risk of serious harm (Euripides, *Bacchae* 303-305). Anger seems to have a similar effect. Someone who is overcome by anger looses control over his own acts, acts aggressively and ferociously. The one that is overcome by anger looses sight of the circumstances he is in and might react in a way disproportionate to the presumed offense that caused it (Homer *Iliad* 9. 553). Pleasure can also be considered a form of disturbance of φρονεῖν. Deluded by the sweetness of pleasure, one can behave excessively and madly in order to enjoy it or continue to enjoy. As we shall see in the next chapter, there is also long association between ἔρως and μανία – to the point that ἔρως, as a disturbance of φρονεῖν, was understood as a form of μανία.

σωφροσύνη could be used as a virtual synonym of φρονεῖν, especially when considered in opposition to μανία[67].

The word σωφροσύνη has a rich and complex meaning that can be very difficult to grasp. Etymologically, it seems to mean something like "sound-mindedness", the condition opposite to a diseased mind. This obviously does little to reduce the word's complexity. A mind can be considered sound, for example, because it perceives reality as it really is, because it has an effective, transparent and unobstructed access to cognitive contents. But it also can be considered sound in a much more pragmatic way: a sound mind would then describe the ability to understand the conditions of one's life and to steer it in the best direction, according to this understanding. These two meanings are closely related; in order to manage one's life well, one must understand in what position one is and how to achieve the intended goals. The first meaning, however, opposes sound-mindedness to madness or even to complete ignorance, whereas the second meaning seems to oppose the clever man to the simpleton, whose actions have consequences detrimental to himself.

Another important meaning of the word σωφροσύνη relates it to what we might call self-control. To understand this, we must take a step back. Our life seems to be the seat of a multiplicity of tensions, of desires and aversions, of pains and pleasures. This multiplicity is not only diachronic, it can also be synchronic. In the same moment, we can experience several disagreeing tensions, pulling us or luring us in different directions. Attraction and aversion, pain and pleasure, desire and repulsion seem to be experiences common to all human beings. Furthermore, they seem to be more than regional and occasional events in human life. This meaning of σωφροσύνη denotes a particular way of dealing with this reality, particularly with pleasures and desires. The former can be very luring and seductive, while the latter can have the power to drag us towards their particular aims. Both can have an overpowering effect and assume a ruling role in one's life. Σωφροσύνη is the word that expresses the condition of a person that can counter these effects. The σώφρων does not let himself be governed by these tensions; on the contrary, he assumes the leading role and takes control of his life. This clearly becomes

[67] Σωφροσύνη is also opposed to ὕβρις, an opposition that will be of fundamental importance in Socrates' first speech. On the notion of ὕβρις, see chapter III, p. 244ff., n. 193.

apparent in his behaviour: he his moderate in his pursuit of pleasure and in his ambitions, he never oversteps the boundaries of proper conduct.

This outer manifestation of σωφροσύνη was particularly important for the reputation of an Athenian citizen. As a member of the ruling class, he was expected to behave in a certain fashion, to show a certain degree of moderation. The relentless and excessive pursuit of pleasure, be it in the form of food, wine, gambling or sex was seen as particularly shameful, since it was considered an expression of a debased and servile nature. A man who is not in control of himself is slave to another power, a condition entirely unsuitable to a member of Athens' ruling body. This meaning of σωφροσύνη has an evident relation to the notion of κρατεῖν αὑτοῦ, being master of oneself, to dominate oneself. Control over one's life does not seem to be taken for granted; it requires a struggle against foreign enemies (pleasure and desire, but also fear) and permanent vigilance. Those who can do this are said to have power over themselves.

The notion of μανία as odd and uncontrolled behaviour puts it in contrast with the ability to control oneself.

> Χο. νενουθέτηκεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὰ πράγμαθ', οἷς
> τότ' ἐπεμαίνετ'· ἔγνωκε γὰρ ἀρτίως,
> λογίζεταί τ' ἐκεῖνα πάνθ' ἁμαρτίας
> ἃ σοῦ κελεύοντος οὐκ ἐπείθετο.
> νῦν δ' ἴσως τοῖσι σοῖς λόγοις πείθεται,
> καὶ σωφρονεῖ μέντοι μεθιστὰς εἰς τὸ λοιπὸν τὸν τρόπον
> πειθόμενός τέ σοι.
> (Aristophanes, *Vespae*, 743-749)

The tendency seems to be to interpret any smaller, less significant transgressions as deviations from φρονεῖν. This seems to be the result of the wide range of determinations that characterise the notion of φρονεῖν as lucidity, especially in what regards behaviour. Accusations or imputations of not being in possession of φρονεῖν can seem exaggerated or hyperbolic, if one is to interpret φρονεῖν in a fundamentally intellectual sense. However, the notion of φρονεῖν, deformalized as the socially shared perspective, manifests itself most visibly in the acts that are endorsed and approved, as opposed to the acts that are criticized and punished. Therefore, even slight transgressions or slightly out of the ordinary behaviour can be seen as a deviation from φρονεῖν.

οὐδ᾽ αἰνέσει με
(Euripides, *Alcestis* 565)

[Ξο.] δὸς χερὸς φίλημά μοι σῆς σώματός τ᾽ ἀμφιπτυχάς.
[Ιων] εὖ φρονεῖς μέν; ἤ σ᾽ ἔμηνεν θεοῦ τις, ὦ ξένε, βλάβη;
[Ξο.] σωφρονῶ, τὰ φίλταθ᾽ εὑρὼν εἰ φιλεῖν ἐφίεμαι;
(Euripides, *Ion*, 519-521)

A fortiori, extremely out of the ordinary behaviour will be understood as a serious deviation, and explained as a manifestation of μανία, as in this passage, where Trygaeus' slave describes his master's strange behaviour:

ὁ δεσπότης μου μαίνεται καινὸν τρόπον,
οὐχ ὅνπερ ὑμεῖς, ἀλλ᾽ ἕτερον καινὸν πάνυ. (55)
δι᾽ ἡμέρας γὰρ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν βλέπων
ὠδὶ κεχηνὼς λοιδορεῖται τῷ Διὶ
καί φησιν, "ὦ Ζεῦ, τί ποτε βουλεύει ποιεῖν;
κατάθου τὸ κόρημα· μὴ ᾽κκόρει τὴν Ἑλλάδα."
(Aristophanes, *Pax* 54-59)

The oddity of the behaviour can go as far as making the person unrecognizable. Μανία, in its most extreme manifestation, can produce such a radical change as to disturb and shatter a person's identity. In a way, the insane person is not the same as he was when he was sane – especially not from the point of view of the community he or she was once part of.

The socially shared perspective prescribes that each individual has its proper place, with rules for approved behaviour. But these rules go beyond the community, beyond the relationships between members of the community and the community itself. The socially shared perspective establishes one's place in the world. To be in possession of φρονεῖν is to understand and to accept this. In the context of Greek culture, this means understanding that one is mortal, vulnerable and weak before the mighty forces that determine one's life. One must accept that there are beings far more powerful, the gods, to which one has to submit. Regardless of how strong, mighty and prosperous mortals might become, there is always an immense abyss between them and the immortal gods. The Greek gods, besides being immortal, powerful, and living a splendoured life, are unpredictable and easily offended. They resent mortals that overstep the boundaries, that become too powerful, too successful, and too arrogant. In relation to the gods, one is exhorted to θνήτα or κατ᾽ ἄνθρωπον φρονεῖν, i.e., to be aware of the awesome distance

between mortals and gods, to respect the superiority of the gods, and to not entertain thoughts and ambitions beyond what is permissible to a mortal. Failing to do so can be construed as an act of ὕβρις.

In the most extreme situations of deprivation of φρονεῖν, one is outside the community. Even if the mad individual is not actively excluded, the radically different recognition of reality will make him or her inhabit a different world. Being mad is being outside, in a place of exhile. Even if the mad individual is unable to recognise his situation as wretched, others will look upon him or her as utterly unhappy. Seen from outside, from the perspective of someone who is φρόνιμος, being under the effect of μανία is probably the height of misery. In a culture that valued community life so highly, being cast off, being in exhile will in itself be the cause of extreme unhappiness. But it is not just the exclusion from the community that the loss of φρονεῖν entails that causes unhappiness. Φρονεῖν itself is a fundamental requirement for happiness, even beyond the social aspect. In order to act correctly, one has to be able to make a correct and effective diagnosis of the situation one is in. One needs to be able to navigate around the obstacles life presents and guide one's existence on a right path. And, perhaps most importantly of all, one has to be able to identify what goals one should pursue, i.e., in what direction happiness lies.

Χο. πολλῷ τὸ φρονεῖν εὐδαιμονίας
πρῶτον ὑπάρχει·
(Soph. *Antigone*, 1347)

ΔΑΝΑΟΣ παῖδες, φρονεῖν χρή· ξὺν φρονοῦντι δ’ ἥκετε
πιστῶι γέροντι τῶιδε ναυκλήρωι πατρί.
(...)
Χο. πάτερ, φρονούντως πρὸς φρονοῦντας ἐννέπεις·
(Aeschylus, *Supplices*, 176-177; 204)

Those who are deprived of φρονεῖν are incapable of doing so. Therefore, they are lead towards unhappiness and ruin.

Κρ. ὅσῳπερ, οἶμαι, μὴ φρονεῖν πλείστη βλάβη.
(Sophocles, *Antigone*, 1051)

In contrast, μανία can be understood either as the cause of ruin or as ruin itself.

εἰς τοῦτο δὲ μανίας ἀμφοτέρων ἀφιγμένων ὥστε μηδετέροις μηδεμίαν ἐλπίδ’ εἶναι σωτηρίας·

(Isocrates, *De bigis*, 16)

Μανία and φρονεῖν are seen as the causes of unhappiness and happiness respectively. A wrong decision, a decision that has lead to an unfortunate result will be retrospectively seen as the result of a disturbance of one's φρονεῖν, as a failure in correctly understanding the situation one is in. The mad person is usually considered to lack the ability to properly lead his or her own life. That is to say that φρονεῖν is seen as a prerequisite to the ability to navigate through life in an efficient and competent way. Those who lack it are seen stumbling through life and acting against their own self-interest.

But this is not just an error of judgement. The socially shared perspective, as the universally recognised standard of φρονεῖν, also prescribes what that community considers to be prudent and wise behaviour and even what is socially appraised as worthwile aims and objectives for one's life. Acting in an imprudent way or just disregarding what is socially accepted as the most valued aims could often be understood as μανία.

Σχετλία, τί μαίνομαι
καὶ δυσμεναίνω τοῖσι βουλεύουσιν εὖ,
ἐχθρὰ δὲ γαίας κοιράνοις καθίσταμαι
πόσει θ', ὃς ἡμῖν δρᾶι τὰ συμφορώτατα,
γήμας τύραννον καὶ κασιγνήτους τέκνοις
ἐμοῖς φυτεύων;
(Euripides, *Medea*, 873-878)

As such, φρονεῖν is one of the fundamental characteristics of a good citizen. A good citizen will be able to understand the situation he is in, comply with what is expected of him from the community and have the ability to plan and execute the actions necessary to benefit himself and those that are dear to him. He will exercise this ability in all his civic duties. Since it was a fundamental characteristic of a good citizen, it was often invoked in court-law speeches or assembly speeches to exhort one's fellow citizens to vote for one's side: "if you are in possession of φρονεῖν...".

ἐκεῖ μὲν οὖν ἐπεδείξατε αὐτοῖς, **ἐὰν δὲ εὖ φρονῆτε**, καὶ νυνὶ τοῦτο φανερὸν πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ποιήσετε, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι τοσαῦτα χρήματα ἃ ὑμᾶς, οὓς ἂν λαμβάνητε ἀδικοῦντας, ἀποτρέψει τιμωρεῖσθαι, καὶ μηδε μίαν αὐτοῖς ἄδειαν δώσετε τὰ ὑμέτερα αὐτῶν διαρπάζουσι καὶ κλέπτουσιν.
(Lysias, *In Philocratem*, 13)

καίτοι ταῦθ’ ὅταν ἐξελέγχωνται πάντα, τοὺς χρόνους ἀνηλωκότες, τὰν Θρᾴκῃ προειμένοι, μηδὲν ὧν ἐψηφίσασθε πεποιηκότες μηδ’ ὧν συμφέρον ἦν, τὰ ψευδῆ δεῦρ’ ἀπηγγελκότες, **πῶς ἔνεστι παρ’ εὖ φρονοῦσι δικασταῖς καὶ βουλομένοις εὐορκεῖν τούτῳ σῴζεσθαι;**

(Demosthenes, *De falsa legatione,* 161)

A citizen that exhibits all these qualities, a truly φρόνιμος citizen, will receive honour and respect from the community. The normal outcome of being lucid, complying with the rules and acting according to the standards set by the socially shared perspective is respect. Failure to do so will have the opposite effect. Being easily overcome by one's emotions, being lead by strong desires, disrespecting the rights and properties of other citizens, these were all transgressions that, besides being penalised, were met with disrespect and opprobrium. Ideally, the citizen is a man who is in control of himself; to be under the power of someone or something else is incompatible with civic dignity. And this includes being overcome by one's emotions and desires. In this sense, lacking φρονεῖν, as in lacking σωφροσύνη, in the sense of moderation or self-control, is as incompatible with civic dignity as lacking φρονεῖν in the sense of the ability to recognise one's situation and to choose the correct course of action. In a culture that valued honour, that put so much stock on being well-regarded by others, being looked down upon is one of the worse situations imaginable.

In a civic context, φρονεῖν is seen as the default setting and is taken for granted apart from the cases in which odd behaviour is evident. This, however, does not mean that it is something one is born with. It is rather something that comes with age and education. One needs to become familiar and adopt the socially shared perspectives – what we called deformalized φρονεῖν – to be considered φρόνιμος. A minor would not be considered to be φρόνιμος in this sense. There would be a time from which we would start to φρονεῖν and assume control over his own affairs:

Ἀκούων τοίνυν ταῦτα ὁ Ἀστύφιλος καὶ τούτου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων προσηκόντων εὐθέως ἐκ παιδίου, **ἐπειδὴ τάχιστα ἤρχετο φρονεῖν**, οὐδεπώποτε διελέχθη Κλέωνι, ἀλλὰ πρότερον ἐτελεύτησεν, οὐχ ἡγούμενος ὅσιον εἶναι, τοιαύτην αἰτίαν ἔχοντος Θουδίππου περὶ τὸν αὐτοῦ πατέρα, τῷ ἐκείνου υἱεῖ διαλέγεσθαι.

(Isaeus, *De Astyphilo,* 20)

γὰρ παῖδες ὄντες ἄφρονες ἦσαν, νῦν δ’ ἄνδρες ἀγαθοὶ γεγόνασι·

(Hyperides, *Epitaphius,* 28)

There is therefore an association between φρονεῖν and maturity, the ability to rule and determine one's own life, based on a lucid and sane perspective, in accordance with the rules and beliefs of the community. These requirements are more stringent in the case of male adult citizens. Being male, adult and free, and having responsabilities within the πόλις as a citizen requires φρονεῖν to a high degree. The belief in the inherent superiority of men over women also means that they are considered, by default, to be more φρόνιμος than their female counterparts. On the other hand, φρονεῖν will also be demanded of men to a higher degree than of women. A certain amount of foolishness and lack of control is expected of women, and the fact that they might lack φρονεῖν to a superlative degree will not have as many serious consequences.

1.3. Μανία as disease: exogenous and endogenous μανία

As an exceptional and mostly damaging phenomenon, μανία was often, though not always, understood as a disease, νόσος. The opposition between μανία and φρονεῖν was seen as an opposition between a healthy, sane perspective and its diseased version.

> πῶς τάδ' οὐ νόσος φρενῶν
> εἶχε παῖδ' ἐμόν;
> (Aeschylus, *Persae*, 750-751)

> νόσον γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ ἀλλόκοτον αὐτοῦ νοσεῖ,
> ἣν οὐδ' ἂν εἷς γνοίη ποτ' οὐδ' ἂν ξυμβάλοι
> εἰ μὴ πύθοιθ' ἡμῶν·
> (Aristophanes, *Vespae*, 71-73)

This seems akin to our own understanding of madness as a generic term for a variety of medical conditions that affect the mind. The idea of madness as disease, however, does not exhaust the conceptual complexity of the phenomenon – and this is recognized in our own culture as it was in theirs. But, as our understanding of madness is to a considerable extent influenced by our understanding of disease in general, so was the ancient Greek understanding of μανία to a great extent shaped by their conception of disease in general. That being said, it is important to remark that the prevailing conception of disease in ancient Greek culture was only influenced by something that we could recognize as a "medical" point of view, i.e., the Hippocratic point of view, at a relatively later date. The ancient Greek tradition tended to understand disease as the result of the

actions of the gods. This religious view seems to have been the prevailing one in the Archaic and Classical Ages. The emergence of a medical point of view, however, offered a challenge or, at least, an alternative explanation to the religious or divine explanation. It situated the causes of μανία not on an outside force, but within the body itself. This opposition between endogenous and exogenous causes of μανία is of fundamental importance and, as we shall see in the subsequent chapters, is at the heart of the perspectives present in the *Phaedrus*.

The exogenous view seems to have been the predominant view in ancient Greek culture. The majority of available sources seem to share some variation of this view[68]. It is widespread in the Homeric poems, the oldest Greek literary source. This view is based on a more general perspective on human nature that regards human beings as vulnerable to the influence of overwhelming exterior forces. Human life is not a closed system, isolated within itself. It is open to the outside, to something different from itself. This

[68] See, e.g., HARRIES, H., *Tragici graeci qua arte usi sunt in describenda insania*, Diss. Kiel, 1891; ROHDE, E., *Psyche.* Seelencult und Unsterblichkeitsglaube der Griechen, Tübingen, Mohr, 1910, vol. II, 4ff., 40f.; VAUGHN, A., *Madness in Greek Thought and Costum*, Diss. Michigan, Baltimore, J.H. Furst Company, 1919; O'BRIEN-MOORE, A., *Madness in Ancient Literature*, Weimar, Wagner, 1924; KÖHM, J., *Zur Auffassung und Darstellung des Wahnsinns im klassischen Altertum*, Mainz, Wilckens, 1928; DODDS, *op. cit.*; LEIBBRAND, W. / WETTLEY, A., *Der Wahnsinn*. Geschichte der abendländischen Psychopathologie, Freiburg/München, Alber, 1961; WALDMANN, H., *Der Wahnsinn im griechischen Mythos*, München, Schubert, 1963; KAUFMAN, M. R., The Greeks Had Some Words for It: Early Greek Concepts of Mind and Insanity, *Psychiatric Quarterly* 35 (1966), 1-33; ROSEN, G., Greece and Rome, in: IDEM, *Madness in Society: Chapters in the Historical Sociology of Mental Illness*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968, 71-136; SIMON, B. / WEINER, H., Models of Mind and Mental Illness in Ancient Greece I: The Homeric Model of the Mind, *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 2 (1966), 303-314; MATTES, J., *Der Wahnsinn im griechischen Mythos und in der Dichtung bis zum Drama des V. Jahrhunderts*, Heidelberg, Winter, 1970; SIMON, B., Models of Mind and Mental Illness in Ancient Greece II: The Platonic Model, *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Science* 8 (1972), 389-404 and 9 (1973), 3-17; CALVO MARTÍNEZ, J. L., Sobre la manía y el entusiasmo, *Emerita* 41 (1973), 157-182; CIANI, M. G., Lessico e funzione della follia nella tragedia greca, *Bollettino del Istituto di Filologia Università di Padova* 1 (1974), 70-110; SIMON, B., *Mind and Madness in Ancient Greece*. The Classical Roots of Modern Psychiatry, Ithaca, NY, Cornell Univ. Pr., 1978; FEDER, L., *Madness in Literature*, Princeton (N.J.), Princeton University Press, 1980; SEGAL, C., *Tragedy and Civilization*. An Interpretation of Sophocles, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1981; ALFIERI, V. E., Antichi e moderni intorno alla pazzia, *Atti della Academia Pontiana* 32 (1983), 407-415; MCDONALD, G., *The divine sickness: A study of madness in Greek tragedy*, Queen's University at Kingston (Canada), 2004; GOLDHILL, S., *Reading Greek Tragedy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986, 168ff.; GALIMBERTI, U., *Gli equivoci dell'anima*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1987; GUIDORIZZI, G., Alle origini del concetto di follia: La Grecia, in: ROSA, F. (ed.), *Immaginario e follia*, Trento, U.C.T., 1991; PADEL (1992); PADEL (1995); EFFE, B., GLEI, R. (ed.), *Genie und Wahnsinn: Konzepte psychischer "Normalität" und "Abnormität" im Altertum*, Trier, Wissenschftlicher Verlag Trier, 2000; SCHILTZ, E. A., *«Sôphrosunê » and « mania »*: the Rise and Study of Moral Psychology, Diss. Duke University, Durham, 2000; CONTI JIMÈNEZ, M. L., Perturbaciones mentales en los poemas homéricos y en las tragedias de Sófocles y Eurípides, *Myrtia* 15 (2000), 35-50; MAZZINI, Società antica e follia, *Medicina e Storia* 13 (2007), 95-120; MAZZINI, Società antica e follia, *Medicina e Storia* 13 (2007), 95-120; GUIDORIZZI, G., *Ai confini dell'anima*. I Greci e la follia, Milano, Feltrinelli, 2010.

openness to alterity manifests itself in various ways. For example, human beings are not self-sufficient; they need something other than themselves in order to sustain themselves. This can be food, water, air or the company of other human beings, amongst other things. But the relationship with alterity is not limited to the fulfilment of needs. It is also marked by the development and expansion of one's existence far beyond what is strictly necessary for survival. This requires one to contact and interact with what is not oneself, to be open to its influence and exercise the ability to react to it and even act upon it. In any of these circumstances, danger is an ever-present factor. Being open to alterity might be our necessary condition, but it is also a form of vulnerability. What allows us to be sustained is also what can hurt us and destroy us. This essential vulnerability is compounded by a feeling of weakness and sometimes even hopelessness in face of the powerful forces human beings have to deal with in order to survive and prosper. Hunger, cold, disease, death are just a few of these forces human beings have to face and cope with. Ancient Greek culture seems to have been particularly attuned to the vulnerability and weakness of men before these forces. This can be expressed by the word ἀμηχανία. The powerful forces human beings had to deal with were understood as being divine or under the control of the gods. As such, one was able to develop a relationship with these forces beyond the mere acknowledgement of their power. One could interact with them through religious rituals, in an attempt to please and pacify them, to escape from their wrath or to gain favour from them.

The influence of the gods was such as to to interfere directly with the soul and mind of human beings. The openness to alterity that characterizes human beings leaves a door open for the interference of these exterior divine forces. This might seem rather odd: we might not be able to control our external circumstances, but we tend to believe that we have some degree of control over our thoughts, feelings and emotions, at least to the point of being able to resist exterior interference. What we tend to forget is a fact ancient Greek culture seems to have been very sensitive to: in most cases, our thoughts are not the result of a gradual and perfectly controlled process. Most often, thoughts just come to us, they just appear. They come, they install themselves and they can even determine the way we act. In other cases, one can be faced with an obsessive thought one cannot get rid of, even if one tries to. There is, in short, some degree of passivity even regarding thoughts. *A fortiori*, the same can be said about feelings and emotions, which are mostly reactions to circumstances we do not entirely control. This degree of passivity regarding

this kind of phenomena, the fact that these can be mysterious in nature and origin and that they can control and overwhelm us was interpreted by the Greeks as a sign of their divine origin. The gods are able to influence and interfere with how people recognize their situation and how they react to their circumstances and how they think and act.

> φᾶρος μέν μοι πρῶτον ἐνέπνευσε φρεσὶ δαίμων
> στησαμένη μέγαν ἱστὸν ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ὑφαίνειν,
> λεπτὸν καὶ περίμετρον·
> (Homer, *Odyssea*, 138-140)

In many cases, this interference is not damaging. The Homeric poems are full of interactions between gods and human beings where the gods give advice and strength. They can prevent humans from making terrible mistakes; they can save them from danger; they can console them and give them reasons to hope for the best. The most notorious example of this kind of interaction can be found in the relationship between Odysseus and Athena in the *Odyssey*. But it can also be seen throughout the *Iliad*, especially in those repeated situations wherein one of the gods provides one of the heroes with unusual and superhuman strength and courage. Since human beings are vulnerable to the power of the gods even in the way they think and act, it is not that surprising to consider the gods as being responsible also for the extraordinary phenomenon of madness. In the same way that they can interfere for one's benefit, they can also interfere for one's ruin.

> δαιμόνιοι, μαίνεσθε καὶ οὐκέτι κεύθετε θυμῷ
> βρωτὺν οὐδὲ ποτῆτα· θεῶν νύ τις ὔμμ᾽ ὀροθύνει.
> (Homer, *Odyssea*, 18.406-407)

> μαινομένα πόνοις ἀτί-
> μοις ὀδύναις τε κεντροδα-
> λήτισι θυιὰς Ἥρας·
> (Aeschylus, *Supplices*, 562-564)

A god can interfere in such a way as to confuse and darken one's lucidity, creating illusions and causing serious mistakes. The interference of the gods, in these cases, made their victims misunderstand their own situation, misdiagnose their circumstances and act wrongly based on these errors. This mode of divine intervention is the object of several depictions in tragedy. In Sophocles' *Ajax*, the title character is made insane by Athena: the goddess makes him believe he is killing the Greek leaders who did not award him the

weapons of the late Achilles, when, in fact, he is just slaughtering cattle[69]. This is followed by a madness scene. Ajax himself, summoned by Athena, appears on stage and boasts of his presumed triumph over his enemies, thanking the goddess for her help. He is completely blind to the situation he is in, still under the delusion created by Athena. This delusion is described as νόσος and μανία. Significantly, both are qualified as θεία:

> ἥκοι γὰρ ἂν **θεία νόσος**· ἀλλ᾽ ἀπερύκοι
> καὶ Ζεὺς κακὰν καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀργείων φάτιν.
> (Idem, 185-186)

> καί μοι δυσθεράπευτος Αἴας
> ξύνεστιν ἔφεδρος, ὤμοι μοι,
> **θείᾳ μανίᾳ** ξύναυλος·
> (Idem, 609-611)

In Euripides' *Heracles*, the protagonist is disturbed by the reluctant goddess Lyssa, Madness, under orders from Hera. During a sacrifice, he becomes delirious. Believing he is travelling to Micenae on a chariot. When his father tries to stop him, he mistakes him for his enemy Eurystheus and, in his fury, kills is own children and his wife - and was about to kill his own father, had not Athena prevented him from doing so (930-932). As with Ajax, the hero's strengths are used against him. The gods turn Heracles' mind, making him see what is not really there. The gods do not simply guide Heracles to their desired outcome like one would guide an automaton. They rather interfere with his ability to recognise the situation he is in. They delude him, and, in his delusion, he acts how he would naturally act if the situation he believes he is in were real. Once he comes back from his madness, he has to deal with the consequences of his terrible acts and, like Ajax, decides to die, though, unlike Ajax he is eventually persuaded to keep on living.

These are very specific forms of divine intervention, of almost surgical precision. The god modifies the victim's perspective in a very precise way, just enough to make him commit the terrible mistake that will ruin him. Ajax, the man that lives for glory, is not only robbed away from his prize, the weapons of Achilles, but also of his vengeance in the most shameful way possible. Heracles, the saviour of the city and his family, is made to mistake his children for his enemies and loose those that he held most dear. Even

[69] SOPHOCLES, *Ajax*, 40-45; 51-54; 59-60; 66-67.

though the way the heroes choose to deal with the situation in the end - Ajax, death, Heracles, life - is completely different, both are said to be in a situation of ἄτη[70].

This is a very complex notion that has drawn considerable scholarly attention[71]. One of the most contentious aspects concerns the relationship between ἄτη as ruin, damage, disaster and ἄτη as blindness, as an inability to correctly understand the situation one is in - with ruin being the consequence of that blindness. There are many passages in extant Greek literature where the word does seem to mean just ruin or damage, regardless of its cause or how it came to be. What is emphasized is the objective damage done, the dire circumstances in which one is. As such, it can be understood as being the opposite of κέρδος, gain or profit.

καὶ τότ᾽ ἤδη κλυτὸν
δωμάτων λυτήριον
θῆλυν οὐριοστάταν
ὀξύκρεκτον βοητὸν νόμον
μεθήσομεν· πόλει τάδ᾽ εὖ·
ἐμὸν ἐμὸν κέρδος αὔξεται τόδ᾽, ἄ-
τα δ᾽ ἀποστατεῖ φίλων.
(Aeschylus, *Coephoroe*, 819-826)

ἐνταῦθα κάμψειν τὸν ταλαίπωρον βίον,
κέρδη μὲν οἰκήσαντα τοῖς δεδεγμένοις,
ἄτην δὲ τοῖς πέμψασιν, οἵ μ᾽ ἀπήλασαν·
(Sophocles, *Oedipus Coloneus*, 91-93)

This notion seems to be behind the meaning of ἄτη as fine or legal penalty, as can be seen in Gortyn law code, 11.34. It is, objectively, a loss suffered by the loser of the process. Other occurrences of the term, however, seem to point towards the fact that the damage is the result from either delirious madness, as in the cases addressed above, or in errors of judgement. In those cases, ἄτη seems to refer especially to the cause of the ruin, the blindness that results in damage.

[70] SOPHOCLES, *Ajax* 123, 195, 307, 363, 642, 848, 976. In line 910, the Chorus recognises their own ate for being tricked by Ajax and thereby not preventing his suicide. EURIPIDES, *Hercules* 917 (twice), 1284.
[71] See DODDS, *op. cit.*, 1ff.; DAWE, R. D., Some Reflections on Ate and Hamartia, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 72 (1968) 89-123; STALLMACH, J., *Ate*. Beiträge zur Frage des Selbst- und Weltverständnisses des frühgriechischen Menschen, Meisenheim a. Glan, 1968; DOYLE, R. E., *Ate, its Use and Meaning, a Study in the Greek Poetic Tradition from Homer to Euripides*, New York, Fordham Univ. Press, 1984. DOYLE, R. E., The Concept of ἄτη in Sophoclean Tragedy, *Traditio* 32 (1976), 1-27; GOLDEN, L., Hamartia, Ate, and Oedipus, *Classical World* 72 (1978), 3-12; SAÏD, S., From Homeric *Ate* To Tragic Madness, in HARRIS, W. (ed.), *Mental Disorders in the Classical World*, Leiden, Brill, 2013, 363-393.

ἐγὼ δ᾽ οὐκ αἴτιός εἰμι,
ἀλλὰ Ζεὺς καὶ Μοῖρα καὶ ἠεροφοῖτις Ἐρινύς,
οἵ τέ μοι εἰν ἀγορῇ φρεσὶν ἔμβαλον ἄγριον ἄτην,
ἤματι τῷ ὅτ᾽ Ἀχιλλῆος γέρας αὐτὸς ἀπηύρων.
(Homer, *Iliad*, 19.86-89)

Χο. τί μέμονας, τέκνον; μή τί σε θυμοπλη-
θὴς δορίμαργος ἄτα φερέτω· κακοῦ δ᾽
ἔκβαλ᾽ ἔρωτος ἀρχάν.
(Aeschylus, *Septem Contra Thebas*, 686-688)

Κρ. ἔγνωκα καὐτὸς καὶ ταράσσομαι φρένας·
τό τ᾽ εἰκαθεῖν γὰρ δεινόν, ἀντιστάντα δὲ
Ἄτης πατάξαι θυμὸν ἐν λίνῳ πάρα.
(Sophocles, *Antigone*, 1095-1097)

The one affected by this blindness is unable to understand himself as such until it is already too late. He acts convinced that what he is doing is right and appropriate for that particular situation. Only a third point of view, either an actual third party or the affected one himself in hindsight, will be able to recognize that course of action as leading or having led to ruin. We shall abstain to go into the debate regarding responsability. It is irrelevant, for our purposes if the blindness of ἄτη is to be imputed to the mortal or to the god. In a way, it is the responsability of both. To Homer and, to great degree, to the tragedians, there was no contradiction between human and divine responsability. They could and did act together to lead situations to their outcome. These actions are, to use Dodds' phrase, "over-determined"[72]. In what pertains to madness, the point that we are trying to make is that the gods put it in motion in order to make mortals be the cause of their own ruin. Madness is the instrument chosen by the gods to make the affected mortals be twice damaged: by the objective ruin itself and by the knowledge that they themselves were the agents of that ruin. Looking back, they are able to recognize what went wrong, the error of their ways. Ἄτη, for them, is the blindness that led them to their present calamitous circumstances. But it is also the circumstances themselves, the ruin, the damage that has been made through and because of that blindness. From the conceptual point of view, this reasoning might seem quite odd, since it appears to be a strange mingling of cause and effect. Blindness or madness was the cause; the ruin was the effect. From an existential point of view, however, it makes perfect sense. Confronted with the

[72] DODDS, *op. cit.*, 7.

destruction of the foundations of their lives, the victims – which are also agents – contemplate all at once the disaster and what lead to it. The distraction that led to a car crash is as part of the situation "car crash" as the damaged vehicle or the broken limbs. It is a whole, complete situation, which, from the point of view of those most affected, can only be experienced in mournful and regretful hindsight. The fact that one looks back and recognizes oneself as the agent of one's own destruction only adds to the devastation caused by the act itself.

This form of divine intervention turns madness into a form of punishment or divine retribution. Madness is sent down to strike the one guilty of offending the god. If this is what we could understand as a form of justice seems to depend on circumstances and point of view. In many cases, the gods are shown to be fickle and prone to anger over small triffling matter and to hold terrible grudges. As usual in traditional Greek religion, being a god does not entail any kind of moral superiority and the behaviour of the gods is often at odds with human morality. Regardless of the truth of the matter, madness can be seen as a sign of divine disfavour, of being hated by the gods. It is a terrible form of punishment, in a way more terrible than death itself. It is this idea that is expressed by the traditional phrase "*quem deus vult perdere dementat prius*"[73].

οἱ γὰρ θεοὶ οὐδὲν πρότερον ποιοῦσιν, ἢ τῶν πονηρῶν ἀνθρώπων τὴν διάνοιαν παράγουσι· καί μοι δοκοῦσιν τῶν ἀρχαίων τινὲς ποιητῶν ὥσπερ χρησμοὺς γράψαντες τοῖς ἐπιγιγνομένοις τάδε τὰ ἰαμβεῖα καταλιπεῖν·

ὅταν γὰρ ὀργὴ δαιμόνων βλάπτῃ τινά,
τοῦτ' αὐτὸ πρῶτον, ἐξαφαιρεῖται φρενῶν
τὸν νοῦν τὸν ἐσθλόν, εἰς δὲ τὴν χείρω τρέπει
γνώμην, ἵν' εἰδῇ μηδὲν ὧν ἁμαρτάνει.
(Lycurgus, *In Leocratem*, 92)

Even though the exogenous view seems to have been the prevalent view in ancient Greek culture, it was not without rival or complementary views. An endogenous view on madness seems to have been developed by the Hippocratic medical tradition. Another endogenous perspective on this phenomenon can also be found, e.g., in some of the

[73] The origins of this saying are debatable. Jebb (JEBB, R. C. (ed.), *Sophocles, The Plays and Fragments III, The Antigone*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1891, Appendix *ad* 622) defends that it is a translation of the verses: " ὅταν δ' ὁ δαίμων ἀνδρὶ πορσύνῃ κακά, / τὸν νοῦν ἔβλαψε πρῶτων ᾧ βουλεύεται." (NAUCK, *Fragmenta Adespota* 455). Cf. HOUSEHOLDER, F.W., Quem deus vult perdere dementat prius, *The Classical Weekly*, vol. 29 (1936), 165-167. See also PADEL (1995), 3ff.

tragedies of Euripides. Both these cases seem to be the result of reflection and investigation on human nature that questioned the religious background of the exogenous view and concentrated on human constitution itself. Rather than look outside to find the cause of madness, they look inside, into human nature itself to find it.

The writings of Herodotus show us how both the endogenous and exogenous views were seen as possible explanations for cases of μανία[74]. Cleomenes, the Agiad king of Sparta, and Cambyses, king of Persia are the two most noteworthy examples of μαινόμενοι in Herodotus' work. Due to his odd and aggressive behaviour, king Cleomenes was bound and locked up by his relatives:

> Μαθόντες δὲ Κλεομένεα Λακεδαιμόνιοι ταῦτα πρήσσοντα κατῆγον αὐτὸν δείσαντες ἐπὶ τοῖσι αὐτοῖσι ἐς Σπάρτην τοῖσι καὶ πρότερον ἦρχε. Κατελθόντα δὲ αὐτὸν αὐτίκα ὑπέλαβε μανίη νοῦσος, ἐόντα καὶ πρότερον ὑπομαργότερον· ὅκως γάρ τεῳ ἐντύχοι Σπαρτιητέων, ἐνέχραυε ἐς τὸ πρόσωπον τὸ σκῆπτρον. Ποιεῦντα δὲ αὐτὸν ταῦτα καὶ παραφρονήσαντα ἔδησαν οἱ προσήκοντες ἐν ξύλῳ.
>
> (Herodotus, 6.75)

He eventually took his own life in a very brutal way: by slashing himself several times with a dagger, starting in his legs and going up to his belly. Herodotus provides several explanations for the insanity of his behaviour and the raging madness of his death.

> ἀπέθανε τρόπῳ τοιούτῳ, ὡς μὲν οἱ πολλοὶ λέγουσι Ἑλλήνων, ὅτι τὴν Πυθίην ἀνέγνωσε τὰ περὶ Δημαρήτου [γενόμενα] λέγειν, ὡς δὲ Ἀθηναῖοι μοῦνοι λέγουσι, διότι ἐς Ἐλευσῖνα ἐσβαλὼν ἔκειρε τὸ τέμενος τῶν θεῶν, ὡς δὲ Ἀργεῖοι, ὅτι ἐξ ἱροῦ αὐτῶν τοῦ Ἄργου Ἀργείων τοὺς καταφυγόντας ἐκ τῆς μάχης καταγινέων κατέκοπτε καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ ἄλσος ἐν ἀλογίῃ ἔχων ἐνέπρησε.
>
> (Ibidem)

These three explanations differ in detail, but not in kind. Most Greeks say he was insane because he had bribed the Pythia to help him depose Demaratus, the Euryponthid king of Sparta; the Athenians because he invaded Eleusis and ravaged the precinct sacred to Demeter and Persephone; the Argives say it was because he cut down a sacred grove. In all of these cases, Cleomenes had commited sacrilege against the gods. In each one of them, the sources quoted for the explanation are the ones most associated with the profaned sanctuary in question: the sacred grove was situated in Argos, Eleusis is located

[74] ROSEN, *op. cit.*; AVERY, H. C., Herodotus VI, 112, 2, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 103 (1972), 15-22; SELDEN, D. L., Cambyses' Madness, or the Reason of History, *Materiali e discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici* 42 (1999), 33-63.

in Attica and Delphi is a panhelenic sanctuary. The basic explanation is that the gods punished Cleomenes with madness on account of the sacrilege he commited. Later on, however, Herodotus provides a different explanation, the one the Spartans themselves apparently believed in:

Αὐτοὶ δὲ Σπαρτιῆταί φασι ἐκ δαιμονίου μὲν οὐδενὸς μανῆναι Κλεομένεα, Σκύθῃσι δὲ ὁμιλήσαντά μιν ἀκρητοπότην γενέσθαι καὶ ἐκ τούτου μανῆναι. (...) Κλεομένεα δὲ λέγουσι ἡκόντων τῶν Σκυθέων ἐπὶ ταῦτα ὁμιλέειν σφι μεζόνως, ὁμιλέοντα δὲ μᾶλλον τοῦ ἱκνεομένου μαθεῖν τὴν ἀκρητοποσίην παρ᾽ αὐτῶν· ἐκ τούτου δὲ μανῆναί μιν νομίζουσι Σπαρτιῆται. (...) ἐμοὶ δὲ δοκέει τίσιν ταύτην ὁ Κλεομένης Δημαρήτῳ ἐκτεῖσαι.

(Idem, 6.84)

The Spartans do not explain his madness as divine punishment, but as the result of a drinking habit widely regarded by the Greeks as unhealthy, the consumption of umixed wine. This is an immanent, endogenous, somatic explanation, apparently of medical origin. It was not a matter of having offended the gods and been punished for it; it is rather a matter of having had a seriously unhealthy habit. Herodotus himself, however, expresses his preference for one of the other explanations. He believes Cleomenes became mad as a result of having bribed the Pythia, thereby endorsing an exogenous cause.

The other mad king is Cambyses of Persia, the son of Cyrus the Great and conqueror of Egypt. Like Cleomenes, his behaviour was odd and violent, having killed his brother and both his sisters. Worst of all, prior to that, he had killed Apis, the sacred bull of the Egyptians, therefore commiting sacrilege against the god.

Ὡς δὲ ἤγαγον τὸν Ἆπιν οἱ ἱρέες, ὁ Καμβύσης, οἷα ἐὼν ὑπομαργότερος, σπασάμενος τὸ ἐγχειρίδιον, θέλων τύψαι τὴν γαστέρα τοῦ Ἄπιος παίει τὸν μηρόν·

(Idem, 3.29)

This the Egyptians believe to be the cause of Cambyses' madness.

Καμβύσης δέ, ὡς λέγουσι Αἰγύπτιοι, αὐτίκα διὰ τοῦτο τὸ ἀδίκημα ἐμάνη, ἐὼν οὐδὲ πρότερον φρενήρης.

(Idem, 3.30)

It is an explanation similar to the ones provided for the madness of Cleomenes: sacrilege is followed by punishment in the form of insanity. However, Herodotus, unlike

with the madness of Cleomenes, disagrees with this explanation and provides a preferable alternative:

Ταῦτα μὲν ἐς τοὺς οἰκηιοτάτους ὁ Καμβύσης ἐξεμάνη, εἴτε δὴ διὰ τὸν Ἆπιν εἴτε καὶ ἄλλως, οἷα πολλὰ ἔωθε ἀνθρώπους κακὰ καταλαμβάνειν. Καὶ γάρ τινα [καὶ] ἐκ γενετῆς νοῦσον μεγάλην λέγεται ἔχειν ὁ Καμβύσης, τὴν ἱρὴν ὀνομάζουσί τινες· οὔ νύν τοι ἀεικὲς οὐδὲν ἦν τοῦ σώματος νοῦσον μεγάλην νοσέοντος μηδὲ τὰς φρένας ὑγιαίνειν.
(Idem, 3.33)

According to Herodotus, Cambyses had been suffering from the so-called "sacred disease", usually understood as equivalent to epilepsy. This affliction is the likely cause of Cambyses' madness since a bodily disease is likely to affect the φρένες as well. The disrespect shown by Cambyses towards sacred things is not presented as a cause, but as a symptom:

Πανταχῇ ὦν μοι δῆλά ἐστι ὅτι ἐμάνη μεγάλως ὁ Καμβύσης· οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἱροῖσί τε καὶ νομαίοισι ἐπεχείρησε καταγελᾶν. Εἰ γάρ τις προθείη πᾶσι ἀνθρώποισι ἐκλέξασθαι κελεύων νόμους τοὺς καλλίστους ἐκ τῶν πάντων νόμων, διασκεψάμενοι ἂν ἑλοίατο ἕκαστοι τοὺς ἑωυτῶν· οὕτω νομίζουσι πολλόν τι καλλίστους τοὺς ἑωυτῶν νόμους ἕκαστοι εἶναι. Οὐκ ὦν οἰκός ἐστι ἄλλον γε ἢ μαινόμενον ἄνδρα γέλωτα τὰ τοιαῦτα τίθεσθαι.
(idem, 3.38).

The endogenous, medical explanation is prefered by Herodotus, unlike the madness of Cleomenes. However, regardless of which explanation is the prefered one, the simple fact that the author registers both kinds of explanation can show us that their co-existence within the same culture and time period was a fact.

The endogenous explanations provided by Herodotus in these two cases are medical in nature. We have already mentioned that drinking unmixed wine was seen as the cause of serious illnesses and even immediate death. But the sacred disease Herodotus mentions as an explanation for the madness of Cambyses is a curious mix of the two explanatory trends we have been dealing with. The mere notion of sacred disease evokes the divine origin of diseases. As we have mentioned before, the idea that diseases were caused by the intervention of a god seems to have been prevalent. It is against this widespread belief that Ancient medicine develops as an alternative explanation of what causes diseases, as an alternative way of looking at the problems regarding health and

how to restore it[75]. Instead of using prayers and incantations, the physicians will treat the disease by using their knowledge and theories on the way the body works. Based on this knowledge, they will use specific forms of intervention, in order to restore health. The notion of a sacred disease, however, suggests the idea of a disease that is de iure and not merely de facto impervious to medical intervention: a disease that the gods cause and only the gods can take away. This notion is radically contested by the author of *De morbo sacro*, a treatise on epilepsy that is part of the *corpus hippocraticum*.

Περὶ μὲν τῆς ἱερῆς νούσου καλεομένης ὧδ' ἔχει· οὐδέν τί μοι δοκέει τῶν ἄλλων θειοτέρη εἶναι νούσων οὐδὲ ἱερωτέρη, ἀλλὰ φύσιν μὲν ἔχει ἣν καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ νουσήματα, ὅθεν γίνεται. Φύσιν δὲ αὐτῇ καὶ πρόφασιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἐνόμισαν θεῖόν τι πρῆγμα εἶναι ὑπὸ ἀπειρίης καὶ θαυμασιότητος, ὅτι οὐδὲν ἔοικεν ἑτέρῃσι νούσοισιν· καὶ κατὰ μὲν τὴν ἀπορίην αὐτοῖσι τοῦ μὴ γινώσκειν τὸ θεῖον αὐτῇ διασώζεται, κατὰ δὲ τὴν εὐπορίην τοῦ τρόπου τῆς ἰήσιος ᾧ ἰῶνται, ἀπόλλυται, ὅτι καθαρμοῖσί τε ἰῶνται καὶ ἐπαοιδῇσιν.

(Hippocrates, *De morbo sacro*, 1)

There is nothing sacred or divine about this disease or about any other. It is the result of a physical disorder. It is only due to ignorance of how the body works that people believe in religious explanations and rely on religious cures. In this treatise, epilepsy is explained as disorder of the brain, namely, as a result of the excess of one of the humours, phlegm, accumulated in the veins of the head. Different kinds of manic behaviour can be

[75] See, e.g., FLASHAR, *op. cit.*; ROSEN, *op. cit.*; MUSITELLI, S., Riflessi di teorie mediche nelle Baccanti di Euripide, *Dioniso* 42 (1968), 93-114; JOUANNA, J., *Hippocrate*. Pour une archéologie de l'école de Cnide, Paris, Belles Lettres, 1974, 355ff.; SIMON (1978); FERRINI, F., Tragedia e patologia: Lessico ippocratico in Euripide, *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 29 (1978), 49–62; BENEDETTO, V. di, *Il medico e la malattia*. La scienza di Ippocrate, Torino, Einaudi, 1986, 35-69; JACKSON, S. W., *Melancholia and Depression*. From Hippocratic Times to Modern Times, New Haven (CT), Yale University Press, 1986; PIGEAUD (1987); LLOYD, G. E. R., *The Revolutions of Wisdom*. Studies in the Claims and Practice of Ancient Greek Science, Berkeley/L.A./London, University of California Press, 1987, 21ff.; MARTÍNEZ CONESA, J. A., Las perturbaciones mentales en el Corpus hippocraticum. El concepto de μανία, Saitabi 41 (1991), 111-123; IONNIDI, H., La sensation-perception dans le Corpus hippocratique, *Philosophia* 21-22 (1991-1992), 278-284; MELLILO CORLETO, L., La manía nella letteratura medica e nella letteratura filosofica dei Greci, *Medicina nei secoli* 4 (1992), 33-42; GUARDASOLE, A., *Tragedia e medicina nell'Atene del V secolo A.C.*, Napoli, M. D'Auria, 2000; LÓPEZ MORALES, D., Dos interpretaciones de la anormalidad psíquica: Vich. 35 y Morb. Sacr. 15, in: A. THIVEL/A. ZUCKER (ed.), *Le normal et le pathologique dans la Collection hippocratique*. Actes du Xème Colloque international Hippocratique (Nice, 6-8 Octobre 1999), Nice, Publications de la Faculté de Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines de Nice- Sophia Antipolis, 2002, vol. 2, 509-522; BYL, S., Le délire, symptôme cnidien ou coaque?, in: JOUANNA, J., LECLANT, J. (ed.), *Colloque « Le médicine grecque antique »*: Actes (Actes du 14e colloque de la Villa Kérylos, qui s'est tenu à Beaulieu-sur-Mer en octobre 2003, Cahiers de la Villa Kérylos, 15), Paris, de Boccard, 2004, 45-52; IDEM, Le délire hippocratique dans son contexte, *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'histoire* 84 (2006), 5-24; HARRIS, W., Thinking about Mental Disorders in Classical Antiquity, in IDEM (ed.), *Mental Disorders in the Classical World*, Leiden, Brill, 2013, 1-26; THUMIGER, C., *op. cit.*; JOUANNA, J., The Typology and Aetiology of Madness in Ancient Greek Medical and Philosophical Writing, *ibidem*, 96-118.

explained through different kinds of disorders and humoural inbalances, as we can see elsewhere in the *corpus*:

> Μαινόμεθα, ὡς ἔφην ἐν τῷ περὶ ἱερῆς νούσου, ὑπὸ ὑγρότητος τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου, ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶ τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἔργα. Ὅταν ὑγρότερος τῆς φύσιος ᾖ, ἀνάγκη κινεῖσθαι, κινουμένου δὲ μήτε τὴν ὄψιν ἀτρεμίζειν μήτε τὴν ἀκοὴν, ἀλλὰ ἄλλοτε ἀλλοῖα ὁρᾶν τε καὶ ἀκούειν, τήν τε γλῶσσαν τοιαῦτα διαλέγεσθαι, οἷα ἂν βλέπῃ τε καὶ ἀκούῃ ἑκάστοτε· ὅσον δὲ ἂν ἀτρεμίσῃ ὁ ἐγκέφαλος, τοσοῦτον καὶ φρονεῖ χρόνον ὁ ἄνθρωπος. Γίνεται δὲ ἡ διαφθορὰ τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου ὑπὸ φλέγματος καὶ χολῆς, γνώσῃ δὲ ἑκάτερα ὧδε· οἱ μὲν γὰρ ὑπὸ φλέγματος μαινόμενοι ἥσυχοί τέ εἰσι καὶ οὐ βοηταὶ οὐδὲ θορυβώδεες· οἱ δὲ ὑπὸ χολῆς, πλῆκται καὶ κακοῦργοι καὶ οὐκ ἠρεμαῖοι. Ἢν μὲν ξυνεχῶς μαίνωνται, αὗται αἱ προφάσιες εἰσίν· ἢν δὲ δείματα καὶ φόβοι, ὑπὸ μεταστάσιος γίνεται τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου θερμαινομένου ὑπὸ χολῆς ὁρμώσης ἐπ᾽ αὐτὸν κατὰ τὰς φλέβας τὰς αἱματίτιδας· ὅταν δὲ ἀπέλθῃ ἡ χολὴ πάλιν ἐς τὰς φλέβας καὶ τὸ σῶμα, πέπαυται.
>
> (Hippocrates, *Epistulae,* 19.1-15)

Regardless of the fact that this explanation and the whole humoural theory itself has been disproven by medical science, the idea that an affliction of the mind, i.e., a form of madness is caused by and only by a bodily disorder is to a very large extent contrary to the traditional exogenous view.

I say "to a very large extent" only, since there are elements in the traditional exogenous view that are not altogether incompatible with this medical perspective. In fact, one could be tempted to understand the opposition between these two kinds of explanatory perspectives of μανία as an opposition between a somatic and a non-somatic view. Such an understanding would suppose the existence of an opposition between somatic and psychic. The traditional view would understand madness as what we could call a disease of the mind or of the soul, not a disease of the body. The soul and the mind being non-somatic in nature, their afflictions could only be understood as resulting from divine intervention, not from any kind of material, physical causes. The medical view would provide an alternative explanation, showing that what is understood as psychic phenomena are actually somatic, and that *a fortiori* so is madness.

This interpretation, however, wrongly pressupposes that the opposition between the somatic and the psychic was a fundamental feature of the traditional views regarding madness and lucidity. Most Greek words for what we could call the mind of soul refer to parts of the body, to organs or viscerae: θυμός, καρδία, κῆρ, even φρένες, from which

φρονεῖν is derived[76]. With the possible exception of νοῦς and its cognates, most words refering to the seat of mental or emotional processes and phenomena have obvious somatic meanings. A religious view of madness is not incompatible with the idea that the body is affected. The fundamental difference between these two views does not lie on the opposition between body and mind or soul, but on the presence of absence of direct divine intervention. The idea of direct divine intervention has serious implications regarding the meaning of madness itself. As we have seen, it can lead to understanding madness as a form of punishment from the gods. If seen as a just punishment, it will reflect on the perspective one has regarding the person affected, as in the case of Cleomenes of Sparta. But, if it is seen as an unjust punishment or if the idea of punishment seems to be completely inappropriate to give meaning to a specific case of madness, then it is the nature and role of the gods that will come to the forefront. In either case, madness will be a sign of something more than just an episodical disorder or malfunction. It will be a sign of something vaster: of how the gods interact with mortals and their place in the world. By removing the gods as an explanatory factor, the proponents of the endogenous view show that the cause of madness lies in human beings themselves and that the possibility of losing one's φρονεῖν does not need the intervention of some mighty outside force to occur, but is rather an immanent possibility, always present within ourselves.

The idea that μανία is an immanent possibility is not limited to the medical perspective. It is highlighted by it. But one could conceive a form of μανία, or, at least, forms of disturbance of φρονεῖν that are immanent without being explicitly somatic in origin. One of the ways of understanding this possibility is by looking at the human soul or mind as being constituted by a multiplicity of elements or forces. These might be in harmony with each other, but at times they might pull in different directions. One finds within oneself forces that one is not able to control. The idea that one is made up of a multiplicity of elements has a background that goes far back in time. Homeric characters are often talking with themselves, or, to be more exact, with their θυμός as if they were

[76] See ONIANS, R. B., *The Origins of European Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1951; also PADEL, R., *In and Out of the Mind*. *Greek Images of the Tragic Self*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994. On the connection between the "mental" and the "physical" in ancient medicine's understanding of madness, see especially PIGEAUD, J., *Folie et cures de la folie chez les médecins de l'Antiquité grécoromaine*. La manie, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1987; EADEM, *La Maladie de l'âme*. Etude sur la relation de l'âme et du corps dans la tradition médico-philosophique antique, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1981

talking to someone else. Often θυμός is spoken of as being something different from the character himself, as if it was an alien being living within one.

> τοῦ δ’ ὠρίνετο θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι φίλοισι·
> πολλὰ δὲ μερμήριζε κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν,
> ἠὲ μεταΐξας θάνατον τεύξειεν ἑκάστῃ,
> ἦ ἔτ’ ἐῷ μνηστῆρσιν ὑπερφιάλοισι μιγῆναι
> ὕστατα καὶ πύματα· κραδίη δέ οἱ ἔνδον ὑλάκτει.
> ὡς δὲ κύων ἀμαλῇσι περὶ σκυλάκεσσι βεβῶσα
> ἄνδρ’ ἀγνοιήσασ’ ὑλάει μέμονέν τε μάχεσθαι,
> ὥς ῥα τοῦ ἔνδον ὑλάκτει ἀγαιομένου κακὰ ἔργα.
> στῆθος δὲ πλήξας κραδίην ἠνίπαπε μύθῳ·
> "τέτλαθι δή, κραδίη· καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο ποτ’ ἔτλης,
> ἤματι τῷ, ὅτε μοι μένος ἄσχετος ἤσθιε Κύκλωψ
> ἰφθίμους ἑτάρους· σὺ δ’ ἐτόλμας, ὄφρα σε μῆτις
> ἐξάγαγ’ ἐξ ἄντροιο ὀϊόμενον θανέεσθαι."
> ὣς ἔφατ’, ἐν στήθεσσι καθαπτόμενος φίλον ἦτορ·
> τῷ δὲ μάλ’ ἐν πείσῃ κραδίη μένε τετληυῖα
> νωλεμέως· ἀτὰρ αὐτὸς ἑλίσσετο ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.
> (Homer, *Odyssea*, 20.9-24)

> ἀμηχανίη δ’ ἔχε θυμόν.
> αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ Κύκλωψ μεγάλην ἐμπλήσατο νηδὺν
> ἀνδρόμεα κρέ’ ἔδων καὶ ἐπ’ ἄκρητον γάλα πίνων,
> κεῖτ’ ἔντοσθ’ ἄντροιο τανυσσάμενος διὰ μήλων.
> τὸν μὲν ἐγὼ βούλευσα κατὰ μεγαλήτορα θυμὸν
> ἄσσον ἰών, ξίφος ὀξὺ ἐρυσσάμενος παρὰ μηροῦ,
> οὐτάμεναι πρὸς στῆθος, ὅθι φρένες ἦπαρ ἔχουσι,
> χείρ’ ἐπιμασσάμενος· ἕτερος δέ με θυμὸς ἔρυκεν.
> αὐτοῦ γάρ κε καὶ ἄμμες ἀπωλόμεθ’ αἰπὺν ὄλεθρον·
> (Idem, 9.295-303)

These obviously are not examples of μανία, not even in the loosest sense of the word. Odysseus is talking with himself, thinking, either deliberating what should be done to save himself and his companions from the Cyclops, or restraining his anger at the suitors, before killing them at the appointed time. What is interesting is that these instances of internal conflict and division are not understood as arguments or conflicting thoughts, but as almost independent and autonomous agents debating with Odysseus, telling him what to do, and themselves being susceptible to being persuaded. In the same way, the idea of σωφροσύνη as self-control, as being one's own master, implies something like a divided self, i.e., that within any one of us there is more than one. This understanding of the internal constitution of human beings opens up the possibility of one acting against one's wishes or intentions, even while being aware of what is happening.

One could, at least hypothetically, be able to act in a way that is contrary to what is recognized as the good and sane thing to do, while being aware of it. It is the possibility that has come down in tradition in the famous lines by Ovid:

> Sed trahit invitam nova vis, aliudque cupido,
> mens aliud suadet. Video meliora proboque,
> deteriora sequor.
> (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VII, 19-21)

Which is the Latin equivalent of these lines from *Medea*:

> καὶ μανθάνω μὲν οἷα δρᾶν μέλλω κακά,
> θυμὸς δὲ κρείσσων τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων,
> ὅσπερ μεγίστων αἴτιος κακῶν βροτοῖς.
> (Euripides, *Medea*, 1078-1080)

Medea is able to recognize that killing her children is the wrong thing to do. But she is compelled to do it, apparently, by her θυμός:

> μὴ δῆτα, θυμέ, μὴ σύ γ' ἐργάσηι τάδε·
> ἔασον αὐτούς, ὦ τάλαν, φεῖσαι τέκνων·
> (idem, 1056-1057)[77]

Medea is not made mad by the intervention of a cruel or punishing god. She is at all times shown as being clear-headed and intelligent, an example of σοφία. But there is a force within her that vanquishes the resistance put up by her maternal instincts. "Medea", as Dodds[78] puts it, "is her own ἀλαστωρ", her own vengeful spirit. In a way, Euripides is divorcing the ability to see clearly, φρονεῖν, from the ability to control oneself, to lead one's life according to φρονεῖν. Φρονεῖν is disturbed, not as the clear vision that it entails, but as the principle that should guide one's life. This idea is summarized by Phaedra in the *Hippolytus*:

> ἤδη ποτ' ἄλλως νυκτὸς ἐν μακρῶι χρόνωι
> θνητῶν ἐφρόντισ' ἦι διέφθαρται βίος.
> καί μοι δοκοῦσιν οὐ κατὰ γνώμης φύσιν
> πράσσειν κακίον'· ἔστι γὰρ τό γ' εὖ φρονεῖν
> πολλοῖσιν· ἀλλὰ τῆιδ' ἀθρητέον τόδε·

[77] On the debate about the autenthicity of the lines 1056-1080, see MASTRONARDE, D. J. (ed.), *Euripides Medea*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, 388ff.
[78] DODDS, E.R., Euripides the Irrationalist, *The Classical Review* 43 (1929), 97-104, especially 99.

τὰ χρήστ᾽ ἐπιστάμεσθα καὶ γιγνώσκομεν,
οὐκ ἐκπονοῦμεν δ᾽, οἱ μὲν ἀργίας ὕπο,
οἱ δ᾽ ἡδονὴν προθέντες ἀντὶ τοῦ καλοῦ
ἄλλην τιν᾽·
(Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 375-383)

One might be in possession of φρονεῖν, but still be undone by one's desires. Such is the case of Phaedra. She might be the victim of Aphrodite's revenge plot against Hippolytus, but the focus of her analysis of her own situation is not centered on herself as a victim of divine intervention, but as a victim of her overwhelming desire. Her desire has been awaken and she cannot control it, although she is aware she should not follow it. This alternative explanation for actions that would normally be attributed to μανία would be the object of considerable philosophical controversy. But it will also be quite influential. It shows that human nature can be thought of as a battlefield between conflicting forces, even without having to posit the direct intervention of the gods. This is, in a loose sense, a form of μανία, but a form of μανία where a conscious but powerless μαινόμενος has to bear witness to his own mad behaviour as it happens before his very eyes.

1.4. The perplexities of φρονεῖν: *Antigone* and *Bacchae*

From what we have seen so far, it would be natural to presume that the attributions of φρονεῖν and μανία were relatively peaceful. By using as a standard and norm for these attributions the socially shared perspective, one would be able to assess the madness or lucidity of one’s fellow citizens. As something shared and accessible to all, the social shared perspective works as the ideal standard. Accordance and compliance makes you φρόνιμος; disturbance and transgression makes you μαινόμενος. The problems that might arise would probably be merely of degree. In the most extreme cases of disturbance and transgressive behaviour, the assessment would be easy. In other less clear cases, however, one would probably hesitate in ascribing μανία as the condition. In any case, the clarity of the standard and the force of this authority would be enough to render these problems unimportant.

However, ease in this case can be merely apparent. Assessing one’s possession or lack of φρονεῖν is not without its difficulties. It is also a matter of momentous importance. Not only is dignity at stake, but also the ability to control one’s life and property. In Attic

law, one could be the subject of a γραφὴ παρανοίας, an accusation of being mad, and, therefore, incompetent to administer one's property and affairs[79]. Deciding if one is in possession of φρονεῖν was in these cases a grave matter, to be decided by a jury. Since juries were composed of a substantial number of Athenian citizens, drawn by lot, the decision regarding one's lucidity was effectively in the hands of a cross-section of the citizen body. In this specific case, the decision effectively and formally belongs to and is taken by the community, and, as is natural in a forensic setting, subject to discussion.

The fact that the attributions of μανία and φρονεῖν could, in specific circumstances, be the object of debate and discussion shows that these attributions were not always peaceful, unanimous and, least of all, automatic. The standard has to be interpreted, and its application assessed on a case-by-case basis. One has to understand the circumstances, the motivations and the causes of, for example, the odd and transgressive behaviour. In short, one has to understand the situation of the supposed μαινόμενος in order to definitely judge him to be so. Mistakes can happen easily, as in any judgement. To judge if someone is φρόνιμος or μαινόμενος, using conformity to the socially shared perspective as the criterion, itself requires possession of φρονεῖν. In other words, one needs to be able to assess the situation correctly, i.e., in conformity with the socially shared perspective.

But the difficulties in attributing φρονεῖν and μανία do not reside exclusively at the assessment level. In order to assess the situation using the socially shared perspective as a criterion, one needs to possess an understanding of the socially shared perspective itself, i.e., one needs to understand the standard of lucidity. At this more basic level, mistakes can also occur. The theses, opinions and judgements that constitute the socially shared perspective are not necessarily held clearly or even explicitly. It is not as if any mature citizen was able to articulate clearly and in an organised and structured manner the different elements of the socially shared perspective, and, to be more specific, those that make the difference between being normality and disturbance, between lucidity and madness. Most of the theses, opinions and judgements that form the socially shared perspective are held implicitly and in a confused way. They are inherited from those who came before, they are part of the landscape. They are considered obvious, easy to

[79] HARRISON, A. R. W., *The Law of Athens*. The Family and Property, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1968, 79-80.

understand, even if they are not so. The limitations of one's understanding of the socially shared perspective are usually only made evident whenever one is confronted with a problematic situation.

The judgement is made harder by the peculiar characteristics of the term φρονεῖν and by the uses of the term μανία and its cognates. We have already seen that the versatility of the term φρονεῖν and its cognates allows for the inclusion of a wide scope of phenomena. The complexity of the socially shared perspective is reflected in this varied use. To be φρόνιμος will include a variety of behaviours considered to be normal and reasonable. To be immoderate, prone to strong and incontrollable desires, to be violent and disrespectful of one's fellow citizens are all signs of lack of φρονεῖν. Even to be mistaken at some point, to lack a clear perspective in a certain situation will be described as not having φρονεῖν. Plenty of these imputations sound contrived, even hyperbolic. It is clear that these disruptions of φρονεῖν are in many cases not serious enough to be considered forms of μανία. And yet it is frequent to come by passages in tragedy and oratory where lack of φρονεῖν in this weaker sense is presented as tantamount to μανία. The hyperbolic accusations of μανία or lack of φρονεῖν are usually made in agonistic contexts. It might be in the context of a law-court speech, where it is fundamental to demonstrate the incompetence, lack of dignity and credibility of the opponent. Or it might be in the context of a tragedy, when two characters with opposing views and motivations confront each other and exchange accusations of being μαινόμενος or lacking φρονεῖν. These accusations serve an emotional and persuasive purpose. By imputing madness on the interlocutor, one adds weight and emotional impact to the statement. Accusing someone of lacking φρονεῖν, even in a context where such accusation is exaggerated, underlines the fact that the accused has acted in a way that, from the point of view of the accuser, disrupts and transgresses the socially shared perspective.

The problems regarding the attributions of φρονεῖν and μανία receive special attention in Tragedy, in particular in the two texts we are going to briefly discuss in the next few pages: Sophocles' *Antigone* and Euripides' *Bacchae*. In both these texts, the problems of attribution of φρονεῖν are put at the centre of the action. The problems focussed there regard the two aspects we have already mentioned: assessment of the situation and understanding of the standard. But, as we shall see, they already open the door to a third and more grave kind of problem: the problematic nature of the validity of the standard itself. Both these tragedies portray communities torn to pieces. In the

Antigone, Thebes is recovering from a literally fratricidal war. In the *Bacchae*, Thebes has been swept by a new religious cult that defies the standards of normal and decent behaviour. In both cases, the usual structures of power and authority have been questioned; in both cases, there is an exceptional situation occurring, which leads to transgression and excess. These are bloody plays, set in a context of violence and chaos.

In the case of the *Antigone*, chaos seems to be a thing of the recent past. The power struggle between the two sons of Oedipus resulted in open war, with the exhiled brother, Polynices, forming a coalition to attack Thebes, held by Eteocles. In the resulting battle, both Eteocles and Polynices fell at each other's hands. Thebes, however, was able to defend itself, and the attack was unsuccessful. The new ruler of Thebes, the late brothers' uncle, Creon, is determined to restore order. He decrees that the dead Polynices should be treated as an enemy and be denied proper funeral rites. By attacking his city, Polynices has turned himself into an enemy of Thebes, and cannot be treated as what he once was: a dear son and ruler of the city. Through his actions, Polynices confused the usually clear categories of φίλος and ἐχθρός. As a Theban and one of the rulers of the city, Polynices was, from the point of view of Thebes, a φίλος – someone to whom one does good and from whom one expects good. But, by attacking the city, he became an ἐχθρός, an enemy. For his family, the situation is even more confused. For his uncle Creon and, *a fortiori*, for his sisters, Polynices should be a φίλος. Beyond his inimical actions, the bonds of blood and family remain. But Creon is also the ruler of Thebes, and, as such, an attack on Thebes cannot be ignored, even if perpetrated by his own nephew. Creon solves this conflict by assuming above all else his duties as ruler, putting aside the duties expected from Creon the uncle. As the ruler of Thebes, Creon has to restore order to the ravished city, and one of the fundamental elements of this task is to administer justice, keeping at all times in mind the fundamental distinction between friend and enemy. Denying him proper funeral rites constitutes the ultimate punishment for his act of violence against his own city (21-38; 175-210). The socially shared perspective prescribes that one should do go good to one's φίλος and harm one's ἐχθρός. Having declared Polynices an ἐχθρός, it is perfectly reasonable to punish him by denying him the proper respect owed to the dead.

This seemingly reasonable and just act of policy, however, conflicts with the traditional sentiment that it is one's duty to perform funeral rites for one's deceased relatives. But Antigone has her own dilemma to deal with. As Creon, she has to deal with a situation where the categories of φίλος and ἐχθρός were seemingly confused. But, unlike

Creon, she does not bear the responsibility of ruling. She has the freedom to act exclusively according to family values. The problem she faces is of a different nature: by performing the funeral rites of Polynices, she is disobeying her uncle, the head of her family, who is also the ruler of Thebes. As a woman, her role is to obey the head of her family. As a woman, her role is to perform the funeral rites of her family members. Either course of action will require her to forgo one of her duties as a woman. The sister of Eteocles and Polynices sets her sisterly duties above her uncle's new decree and disobeys (43-48; 450-470). For her, both brothers are equal in death, regardless of the side they fought on during the war. They are both her brothers, both deserving of proper funeral rites. The punishment for her disobedience is death. She performs her duties as sister fully aware of the consequence of her actions. In this, she contrasts with her sister Ismene, who chooses to fulfil her duty of obedience towards the man who is both the ruler of the city and the head of her family (49-68).

The main conflict of the *Antigone*, therefore, involves the confrontation between these two perspectives. Both Creon and Antigone share one important characteristic: they are absolutely sure that they themselves are in possession of φρονεῖν. On the one hand, Creon's intention is to restore order in the city by following the traditional precept of doing good to one's friends and harming one's enemies. On the other hand, Antigone's understands that her duty as sister remains the same, regardless of the inimical actions of her brother. Both positions are reasonable and justifiable. Both positions are compatible with and included within the socially shared perspective. Both characters can and will claim they are in possession of φρονεῖν. From Creon's point of view, Antigone's actions are rebellious and need to be punished. By disobeying the laws of the city, and himself as the head of the family, Antigone exceeded her position as a woman (484-485; 525). By treating both brothers equally, regardless of their actions, she is ignoring the fundamental principle that requires one to distinguish between friends and enemies, and treat them accordingly (516-520). Finally, by choosing to disobey the law, Antigone has wilfully and with clear knowledge made her life forfeit. Throwing away one's life for the sake of someone who took up arms against one's city seems to be incompatible with the possession of φρονεῖν. Antigone, from Creon's point of view, is clearly not φρόνιμος.

But, from Antigone's point of view, it is Creon who is not φρόνιμος. By declaring that Polynices should be treated as an enemy, ignoring the fact that he is, above all else, a family member, Creon is ignoring the ancient and sacred duty to perform funeral rites

for one's relatives. By preventing the women of his own family from fulfilling an essential part of their role as women, he is subverting religious and family tradition. Antigone's defiance brings to the forefront a conflict between two sources of authority: political power and religious tradition. From Antigone's perspective, Creon's decree is impious: he is forcing his subjects to violate the sacred laws that regulate the proper treatment of the dead. The socially shared perspective might prescribe that one should obey the ones who are in charge, but, from Antigone's point of view, Creon's order is illicit, and Creon lacks φρονεῖν for defying the gods with his impious decree.

Both Creon and Antigone are convinced that the community endorses their respective positions. Creon, as the ruler, believes that he speaks in the community's name and interprets the fact that no one but Antigone defies his decree as a sign of acquiescence[80]. Antigone, on the other hand, takes the community's silence as the result of fear of punishment (509). The sequence of events shows that Antigone is right in this respect. As protest arises, Creon comes to know that others support Antigone in disagreeing with the decree. The most vocal of Antigone's supporters is her husband-to-be, Creon's own son, Haemon. The discussion between Haemon and his father insists on the subject of φρονεῖν and who is in possession of it. From Haemon's perspective, Creon is not the voice of authority, the person who establishes, in virtue of his power, the rules and standards that the community has to follow. Rather, Creon, with his impious decree, as set himself apart from the community (736-739). According the Haemon, he possesses φρονεῖν in isolation, μόνος (707), which, considering the social nature of φρονεῖν, is a paradoxical situation.

By adopting a perspective that goes against the ancient religious traditions of the city, which are endorsed by the whole community, Creon is breaking the social nature of the socially shared perspective. Through fear and the threat of violence, Creon imposes his own perspective on the community. In reality, Creon is himself transgressing what is prescribed by the socially shared perspective. In a way, Creon, in spite of his position of authority, is, like Antigone, a rebel. But, unlike Antigone, who knows she is rebelling against the orders of her ruler, he is not aware of his own transgression. He is honestly and sincerely convinced that his perspective and his decree are perfectly in tune with the

[80] The position of the old men that form the Chorus is ambiguous at first. It is clear that they accept Creon's decree. But they express their approval in terms of respect for Creon's authority and fear of punishment (211-214; 220). They are silent regarding the justification for the decree.

socially shared perspective. More than this: he is perfectly convinced that, since he is old, a man and a ruler, he will possess a greater degree of φρονεῖν than his subjects, and, especially, the woman and younger man that have directly confronted him (639-680). In a society based on the belief that women were inferior, and that age brought wisdom, these assumptions are not odd. The fact that Creon articulates these assumptions when his authority is being disputed is more than a simple display of arrogance: it is rather an appeal to the socially shared perspective in which he believes his decree is based. Creon only realises his mistake when confronted with a higher authority. The gods themselves show their disapproval through signs interpreted by the seer Teirisias (998-1032). Faced with this, Creon has no choice but to accept the fact that his decree was impious (1105-1106). It becomes clear that it was Creon, not Antigone, that lacked φρονεῖν.

Creon's position was not entirely unreasonable. Strictly speaking, he was not μαινόμενος. He lacked φρονεῖν because he misunderstood the socially shared perspective, because he believed that the values he was defending had priority over the religious duty of honouring the dead. Ironically, it is Antigone's position that is vindicated. Antigone, the young woman, Antigone, who alone defies authority and throws her life away is at the end considered to be the φρόνιμος one. And yet she is the one that appeared to lack φρονεῖν, when she, in spite of her inferior status, claimed to know better than everyone else. But Antigone's isolation was merely apparent, as merely apparent as Creon's conformity to the socially shared perspective. Others disapproved of Creon's decree, but fear made them silent and obedient. The fact that φρονεῖν lied where one would least expect, with the woman, the young, the subjects, rather than with the man, the elderly, the ruler, is itself a troubling prospect. The normal association between gender, age and φρονεῖν, and the natural expectation that the ruler is better suited for that role than the ruled are shattered. In spite of the resolution of the conflict through the authority of the gods, the fact remains that the complexity of the socially shared perspective can be a potential source of misunderstanding and confrontation. The multiplicity of theses and the lack of clarity in the understanding and interpretation of these theses allow for differences in emphasis and hierarchy of values.

In the *Bacchae*, we find a world turned upside down, in the grips of a religious revolution. A new god, Dionysus, and a new cult are being introduced into Thebes, and facing significant resistance. Several important people within Thebes, especially Agave and her sisters, the daughters of the founder of the city, Cadmus, deny Dionysus' divine

nature. Dionysus is the son of another of Cadmus' daughters, the now deceased Semele, with, supposedly, Zeus. Semele's sisters deny that Zeus fathered Dionysus and is himself a god. But the reasons for the difficulty in accepting this new god go beyond a doubtful paternity. This god is like no other, and he demands a radically different sort of cult. Dionysus is a god commonly associated with wine and drunkenness. Hesiod refers to grapes as "δῶρα Διωνύσου", gifts of Dionysus, and the god himself as "πολυγηθέος", "overjoyful"[81]. This association between this god and wine, and the joy of drinking wine would probably lead one to presume that Dionysus is a joyful, benevolent god. But, as most Greek gods, Dionysus is a powerful entity, whose works can cause great benefit, but also great harm. He is not only the god of wine and drunk revelry: he is a god of madness, of odd and wild behaviour.

This is particularly evident in the type of cult this god demands, and the peculiar religious experience his followers go through. Three aspects of the cult mentioned and portrayed in the *Bacchae* are particularly noticeable for their oddity: ὀρειβασία, σπαραγμός and ὠμοφαγία. The women of Thebes abandon their houses for the mountains, where they spend their days dancing wildly and performing the ecstatic rites due to the god. This is ὀρειβασία. These rituals culminate in σπαραγμός, ripping apart a live animal with bare hands and – a part of the rite mentioned only once, in passing, in the whole tragedy – ὠμοφαγία, eating the flesh of the animal raw. Just leaving the city represents a substantial disturbance of the normal social order. A woman's place is at home, not outside, let alone outside the city, in the mountains. They abandon their usual occupations, their prescribed place at home to perform new and odd rituals (32-38). Leaving the city signals they are leaving behind the prescriptions and limitations of normal everyday life. The city is where normal, civilized life takes places; in the mountains one lives wildly, with no rules but to worship the god and be enthralled by him. Dancing wildly, hunting down animals, eating their flesh raw are all behaviours that would be unacceptable in the city. The cult of Dionysus is not only new and of doubtful origin, it demands a form of worship that is intrinsically transgressive. The women of Thebes worship Dionysus impelled by a madness brought by the god himself.

This madness manifests itself not only in the strange and wild behaviour the women display in the mountains, but also in what we can describe as an altered state of

[81] HESIOD, *Opera et Dies* 614.

consciousness, where they lose their individuality in the group of worshippers, the θίασος, and become as if one with the god. The madness that Dionysus uses as a punishment for his incredulous aunts – a madness that is extended to the other women of Thebes – makes them behave in a way similar to the Bacchants that form the Chorus of the tragedy. For the Chorus, however, performing the ecstatic rites is a joy without compare, not a punishment. It is only a punishment for those who do not accept and embrace bacchic frenzy, the religious experience brought about by the new god. Had they accepted the new god willingly, the odd rites would be integrated into the life of the city. They would be somewhat normalised and tamed. They would become periodic and predictable moments of frenzy, whose potentially destructive effects would be cancelled or at least compensated by integration into a socially accepted religious festival. By trying to resist the introduction of these new religious rites, the Thebans are actually putting themselves in a situation where the sheer raw power of the god becomes impossible to integrate, tame and moderate. The new religious rites become destructive and deadly. By maddening the women of Thebes, Dionysus is punishing the whole city that does not accept him, that denies his divinity, not just his aunts or the women themselves.

The resistance to the new religious cult does not come from where one would expect: the elderly and the religious establishment. Cadmus, the old founder and previous king of Thebes, and the prophet Teirisias adhere to the cult of the new god. Even if they are not, *stricto sensu*, mad, Cadmus' and Teirisias behaviour is odd to the point of making one doubt their φρονεῖν. They are willing to leave the city and go to the mountains to participate in the dionysiac rites, in spite of their age and position. They dress in a fashion appropriate for the rites, but completely at odds with normal day-to-day clothing. In spite of their age and weakness, they are willing to dance to honour the god. The old men will mimic at least part of the behaviour of the mad women, despite not being affected by the same madness. Teirisias acceptance of Dionysus is particularly relevant. As a religious expert, a prophet, a seer, he accepts the new cult, but in a more moderate, tamed and manageable version. He realises that not only Dionysus is truly a god, but also that accepting him will blunt the edge of the more disagreeable aspects of his cult. The real resistance to the new religious cult comes from the ruler of Thebes, the young Pentheus, grandson of Cadmus through his daughter Agave. When he comes back from a brief absence, he finds a city devasted by the religious upheaval. He is motivated to restore

order to the city: to stop the odd practices the women have been indulging on, and to bring them back to the city.

The fact that it is the Pentheus the main opponent to the new religious practices is somewhat ironic. The irony becomes clear when the young Pentheus is confronted with the excentric behaviour of the old men. The expectations regarding the differences between young and old in what relates to φρονεῖν are turned upside down. The old men are the ones supposed to be φρόνιμοι, and yet they are willingly going to partake in the wild rites worshipping Dionysus. The young man is the one who actually represents the sobriety and the attachment to traditional rules of behaviour normally associated with the old. There is an evident tension between the authority that normally lies in the old men and, in the case of Teirisias, the religious expert, and the course of action they propose. The fact that it is a young man that berates them and censures their behaviour only makes this tension even more salient. From Pentheus' point of view, a large chunk of the city lacks φρονεῖν, especially the women, but also Cadmus and Teirisias. For Pentheus, this is not a legitimate new cult, but an excuse to behave wantonly.

Pentheus' position relies on the assumption that he himself is possession of φρονεῖν. This is a perfectly reasonable assumption, if we consider that what Pentheus is defending is a return to the perspective and behaviours that were an integral part of the socially shared perspective, before the introduction of the new cult. From Pentheus' perspective, he remains as he always was, φρόνιμος, and the standard of φρονεῖν remains the same: the socially shared perspective that was in force before Dionysus. It is rather the ones who adhere to the new cult that lack φρονεῖν, even if these outnumber the others. As he becomes increasingly isolated, Pentheus assumes the guise of the only sane man in a world suddenly turned mad. He alone is in possession of φρονεῖν. This fact may seem incompatible with the social component that is the usual component of φρονεῖν.

But the authority of the socially shared perspective that constitutes the deformalisation of φρονεῖν does not rely solely on the strength of numbers. The theses and rules included in the socially shared perspective have their own prescriptive force. They are not arbitrary statements, which simply reflect the power of the majority, but rather the expression of a specific way of understanding reality. The different prescriptions and rules might sometimes seem arbitrary themselves, or at least incoherent, they might admit variation without serious harm to the whole perspective, but what

Pentheus is faced with is a complete revolution in social habits and behaviour. For Pentheus, the choice is between fighting for the worldview and social order he has always known and accepted, or embracing a new and strange religious cult of a supposed god of doubtful paternity. It is perfectly natural that he chooses the former instead of the latter.

However reasonable Pentheus' position might seem, it hinges on the denial of Dionysus' divinity – and Dionysus is, in fact, a god, albeit an odd one. Regardless of how doubtful Dionysus' origin might be, he shows his divine nature throughout the tragedy, over and over again, through a series of θαύματα (443-450; 576-637; 699-768). These are repeatedly discounted, dismissed and disregarded by Pentheus, who seems to become more and more steadfast in his opposition to the new religious rites and the people who perform them. Dionysus' divinity might be odd, almost unbelievable, but Pentheus is given evidence of the unbelievable. What can one do, then, when what was once inconceivable becomes fact? If Dionysus is, in fact, a god, then refusing to worship him, in spite of all the signs of his divine power is the opposite of φρονεῖν. By repeatedly defying the power of Dyonisus, Pentheus is doing what no mortal should: he is failing to θνητὰ φρονεῖν. Dionysus being a god, the standard of φρονεῖν changes radically. Cadmus, Teirisias and the Asian Bacchants are the ones who are, in fact, in possession of φρονεῖν, since they are displaying the appropriate behaviour towards the god. In spite of the oddity of their behaviour, in spite, in the case of the Asian Bacchants, of the exhilarated, excentric and exhalted mood in which they permanently are, they are far more φρόνιμοι than the sober and austere Pentheus.

Yet one should not lose sight of the paradoxical nature of this φρονεῖν. This is a φρονεῖν full of madness. This is particularly evident in the case of the Theban women turned mad by Dionysus. Unlike the Asian Bacchants, who revel freely in their adoration of Dionysus, the women of Thebes became Bacchants as a punishment for their impious denial of Dionysus' divinity. Their wild behaviour is simultaneously what is demanded of them in the cult of Dionysus, and the god's way of punishing them – and the whole city of Thebes. Ironically, the women's madness makes them act according to the new standard of φρονεῖν, the standard that understands Dionysus as a god and makes his odd rites not only acceptable, but also mandatory. But the lack of control over their own actions, the fact that they are worshipping Dionysus not of their own accord, but forced by the god's overwhelming power prevents them from being φρόνιμοι. If we consider accepting the god and worshipping him freely as the new standard of φρονεῖν, then the

women of Thebes are just made to mimick the behaviour of the φρόνιμος, while truly remaining mad. If one does not accept Dionysus freely, he will use his power to subjugate the recalcitrant mortal and force him or her to worship him.

Pentheus himself becomes the victim of this kind of control by Dionysus. This constitutes a kind of madness different from the one Pentheus could be accused of when he defiantly resisted Dionisus' divinity and violently tried to surpress his cult. In the one, Pentheus could not recognise the signs that proclaimed Dionysus' divinity. He did not see things as they really were; in this sense, he lacked φρονεῖν. But he was still in control of himself, or, at least, he was not under Dionysus' power. In the other situation, however, he is no longer in control; he is entirely under the god's ruthless hand. Unlike the women of Thebes, Pentheus' god-inspired madness does not lead him to accept Dionysus' divinity and join in the rites. It makes him agree to the silly and ultimately deadly act of disguising himself as a Bacchant in order to spy on the women. Dionysus exercises control over Pentheus by using his own curiosity against him. That this is more than mere manipulation becomes evident when Pentheus' perspective becomes more and more disturbed and he experiences what amounts to an epiphany of Dionysus in the form of a bull, although without being able to recognise him as a god (917-922). In the terms of the new standard of φρονεῖν instituted by the arrival of Dionysus, this epiphany is a step in the direction of a φρόνιμος perspective; at least, he has had a glimpse of the god in one of his divine forms. And yet, he is no longer in control of himself, but rather under the divine power of Dionysus. His behaviour becomes more and more extravagant: he enjoys dressing up as a Bacchant and mimicking their dances and gestures. Pentheus is also unable to understand the danger of his own situation, that he is being controlled and manipulated by the god, and led to his death. Lack of control over one's actions, odd behaviour, inability to understand one's situation: none of these facts are compatible with the notion of φρονεῖν. Pentheus does not become φρόνιμος. He is either a sane man turned mad, or an already mad individual turned madder.

The world of Pentheus has changed radically around him. Either the standard of φρονεῖν remains where it was, and Pentheus is the last sane man in a world turned mad, or the standard of φρονεῖν has shifted, and Pentheus is no longer φρόνιμος, although his perspective has not changed. Regardless of which of these two interpretations one adopts, one is confronted with the disturbing possibility of the notion of φρονεῖν being somehow detached from the socially shared perspective. If the whole world can turn mad, this

means that there is no necessary connection between φρονεῖν and the perspective endorsed by the majority of the members of the community. One can very well be in possession of φρονεῖν alone. On the other hand, if the standard itself can shift so radically as to still be in harmony with the changing social perspective, this means there is no necessary connection between the content of the perspective and its status.

2. ῎Ερως and Παιδεραστία

2.1. ῎Ερως and love: differences between the semantic field of ἔρως and the semantic field of passionate love

Although it is often translated into English as “love”, the Greek word ἔρως differs greatly from the modern English concept or any of its correlates in modern languages. The difference lies not only in its literary and everyday usage, but also in the conception of the phenomenon itself. But first of all, we should bear in mind that the word "love" has a much wider range of meaning than the Greek word ἔρως. We speak of passionate love, sexual love, but also of maternal or paternal love, filial love, the love for one's country, even the love for this or that kind of music, for food, etc. The wide range of meanings can go from intense passionate attachment to a fondness for something that is greater than usual. This seems to indicate, on the one hand, the great versatility of the word “love”, but, on the other hand, how usage has devaluated its meaning, making it a somewhat equivocal word. In a way, the word "love" joins in itself the meanings of different words that express different forms of attachment that Ancient Greek keeps more or less separate. To use ἔρως with the same scope would be rather bizarre.

The Greek word ἔρως has two main meanings. In the one hand, it can designate something akin to what we call passion, the state of being in love. On the other hand, it can mean something like desire in the broad sense of the word. The difference is important. Whereas ἔρως as passion could be described as a form of desire, it is, after all, a very specif form of desire, with a very specific object. In its more general meaning, the word ἔρως is used to refer to any kind of desire.

θεόθεν ἐραίμαν καλῶν,
δυνατὰ μαιόμενος ἐν ἁλικίᾳ.

(Pindar, *Pythia* XI, 50-51)

In this sense, one can have ἔρως for food or drink or sex, and even for this specific food or drink or for sex with this specific person. It can be regarded as a synonym for ἐπιθυμία – it is a craving for something[82]. Even if we consider being in love as a form of desire, it is easily understood how it is much more complex phenomenon than the desire for food or even sex. Whether ἔρως as desire is the result of a devaluation of the meaning of ἔρως as passionate love is something we cannot decide. It might very well be the case that passionate love itself was understood under the light of intense craving and desire, thereby extending the usage of the term to a specialized and peculiar form of desire. Both explanations are reasonable; both explanations are based in different but equally valid ways of understanding the phenomenon of passionate love. In any case, ἔρως became a relatively specialized word, a word whose primary meaning is, according to most lexicographers, passionate love, especially with a sexual component. That being the case, it is easy to forget the other meaning of ἔρως as craving or desire for things of which one would hardly be in love with. One could have ἔρως for power:

Οὗτος ὁ Δηιόκης ἐρασθεὶς τυραννίδος ἐποίεε τοιάδε.
(Herodotus, 1.96);

for glory:

θυραῖος ἔστω πόλεμος, οὐ μόλις παρών,
ἐν ᾧι τις ἔσται δεινὸς εὐκλείας ἔρως·
(Aeschylus, *Eumenides*, 864-865);

for one's fatherland:

Χο. ἔρως πατρώιας τῆσδε γῆς σ’ ἐγύμνασεν;
(Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 540);

for war:

ἀφρήτωρ ἀθέμιστος ἀνέστιός ἐστιν ἐκεῖνος

[82] See THORNTON, B, *Eros: The Myth of Ancient Greek Sexuality*, Boulder (Col.), Westview Press, 1997, 13.

ὃς πολέμου ἔραται ἐπιδημίου ὀκρυόεντος.
(Homer, *Ilias*, 9.63-64);

for weeping:

αὐτίκα γάρ με κατακτείνειεν Ἀχιλλεὺς
ἀγκὰς ἑλόντ᾽ ἐμὸν υἱόν, ἐπὴν γόου ἐξ ἔρον εἴην.
(Idem, 24.226-227);

for having children:

χρόνια δὲ σπείρας λέχη
ἄτεκνός ἐστι καὶ Κρέουσ᾽· ὧν οὕνεκα (65)
ἥκουσι πρὸς μαντεῖ᾽ Ἀπόλλωνος τάδε
ἔρωτι παίδων.
(Euripides, *Ion*, 64-67);

and, obviously, for food and drink:

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο
(idem, 1.469 = 2.432, 7.323, 9.92. 9.222, 23.57, 24.628; *Odyssea*, 1.150, 3.67, 3.473, 4.68, 8.72, 8.485, 12.308, 14.454, 15.143, 15.303, 15.501, 16.55, 16.480, 17.99, 24.489).

It can also be used to denote a desire for a specific outcome of a situation, e.g., the decision to be granted asylum, as in Aeschylus' *Supplices*:

πρὸς ταῦτα μίμνε καὶ θεοὺς ἐγχωρίους
λιταῖς παραιτοῦ τῶν σ᾽ ἔρως ἔχει τυχεῖν.
(Aeschylus, *Supplices*, 520-521).

It is a desire, a craving for something that is absent. The hungry and thirsty desire food and drink; the childless desire children; the one who is away from his homeland desires to return to it; the fugitive desire refuge.

The other meaning of ἔρως seems to be quite similar to our notion of "falling in love". It includes both the idea of passionate, exclusive attachment to someone, including sexual desire. Seen in isolation from the phenomenon of falling in love, the idea of ἔρως as sexual desire seems to be similar to the meaning of ἔρως mentioned in the previous paragraph. In a way, one could understand it as a craving similar to the desire for food and drink when one is hungry and thirsty. It is a lack that demands immediate satisfaction.

Τὴν δ’ ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη νεφεληγερέτα Ζεύς·
Ἥρη κεῖσε μὲν ἔστι καὶ ὕστερον ὁρμηθῆναι,
νῶϊ δ’ ἄγ’ ἐν φιλότητι τραπείομεν εὐνηθέντε.
οὐ γάρ πώ ποτέ μ’ ὧδε θεᾶς ἔρος οὐδὲ γυναικὸς
θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι περιπροχυθεὶς ἐδάμασσεν
(Homer, *Ilias*, 14.312-319)

But ἔρως is not limited to sexual desire, even if it might be an important component of it. What, then, is are we talking about when we talk about ἔρως? In order to understand this, we need to first consider what it means to fall in love. This is a very old story: among the multitude of anonymous faces one encounters everyday, one finds someone whose simple presence is so overwhelming as to absorb all attention and interest. It does not matter if it is someone one has never met before or someone one has known for all of one's life. In a moment's notice, the everyday perspective about that particular person changes radically. It is no longer one of our acquaintances or friends, or a mere face in the crowd: it is the centre of one's life. The beloved becomes omnipresent in the lover's thoughts. No matter what one is doing or thinking about, one is bound to end up thinking of one's beloved. The change love operates is as radical as this: whereas one normally lives for oneself, now one lives for the beloved; whereas one normally does everything for one's sake, now it is the beloved the person for sake of which everything is done; whereas one normally pursues what appears to be good and shuns that which seems to be bad for oneself, now it is the beloved's well-being that's always at stake. The beloved replaces one's own self as the centre of the universe. The beloved is everything one needs to be the happiest person in the world: nothing else is needed, everything else is superfluous. One's whole life turns into a project whose objectives are to be united to one's beloved and to do everything to make him or her happy, since it is in one's beloved's happiness one finds every fulfilment and joy. This is the pinnacle of one's life: to find someone to love and to be loved by that person till the end of their days. Once one finds one's true love, everything else will fall into place, for love gives one the strength to overcome any obstacle and to cope with any problem, since the beloved's presence is the consolation for every sorrow and the source of every happiness. This corresponds to an obsessive attachment to a single person, an attachment that dominates and occupies one's life as long as the attachment lasts.

In this sense, ἔρως seems to correspond to our notion of falling in love. There are, however, important differences in the understanding of the phenomenon that we need to mention. The first difference has to do with the very nature of the phenomenon itself. We tend to think of passionate love as a feeling. As such, it corresponds to a subjective phenomenon. Love, in this sense, is what one feels towards a specific person. It is the result of a constitutive lack. One needs a beloved to satisfy that lack, but that lack is not created by the feeling. It is rather awaken and made manifest by it. The lack was already there. Love itself is considered to be the feeling of which all those thoughts, actions and behaviours are the consequence. The ancient Greek predominant tradition, however, does not seem to have emphasized the subjective nature of this phenomenon. It was an objective force, something that came from without. Ἔρως was the overwhelming force that overcame someone when confronted with someone else's beauty. In a way, it could be described as a force emanating from whoever was its source, as a result of his or her beauty. Objectively speaking, ἔρως is the force that makes one desire the beloved to be an integral part of one's life. Another important difference concerns the issue of reciprocity. When we think of an erotic relationship, one of the features most immediately comes to mind is reciprocity. When one is in love, one passionately desires to be loved by the beloved; if that does not happen, one deems oneself unhappy in love. This, however, was not necessarily the case in the ancient Greek conception of this phenomenon. Being understood as an objective force that created an attachment to a beloved, ἔρως does not include in itself the notion of reciprocity. It is rather the force that makes this person be passionately in love with that person. Reciprocity might occurr, but that is incidental to the understanding of ἔρως and of secondary importance. Mostly, it is understood as unidirectional and non-reciprocal. As we shall see later on in this chapter, this aspect of ἔρως will have particular importance in the kind of erotic situation that is most relevant for the reading of the *Phaedrus*, παιδεραστία.

2.2. The prevailing tradition: the bad reputation of ἔρως

Living in the midst of a culture that praises love and passion, it may be difficult for us to understand a culture whose views on this subject are less than enthusiastically favourable. Ancient Greece is such a culture; and this seems all the more strange when we realize that so much of its extant literature refers to and even dwells in the topic of

passion – but to describe it as a source of suffering, of destruction and calamity, of foolishness and utter humiliation. The strangeness of this characterization must not be understated. In fact, it seems that hardly any other perspective could be as foreign to our own as this. However, once we start to analyse it, we soon realize that a lot of the metaphors and images and similes used in Greek literature are still used by us today. For example, we need not look very far to find references to the state of being in love as some sort of servitude, as a disease or a form of madness. But we easily overlook the meaning of these metaphors. They have been repeated so many times that we do not even realize what they are really saying about the works of love in our lives. Love turns us into slaves, is akin to a sickness, makes us mad. Nevertheless, we consider it one of the greatest blessings ever bestowed on mankind. This paradox is at the heart of our normal experience of love: one suffers for love, love turns one's life into a mess; however, it brings joy and happiness. One is happy to have one's life wrecked in this fashion. But this paradox is also at the heart of Greek way of thinking about ἔρως. It is true it is a destructive force, but it is a charming one as well: it is as dangerous as it is seductive, and all the more dangerous for being seductive. The foreignness of the idea of ἔρως as a negative force in one's life makes this difficult to understand. Often enough, one will be tempted to skim over the literary sources that present ἔρως in such a negative way and interpret the metaphors used to describe it in the same way we interpret those same metaphors in modern literature: as mere overused τόποι. However, we ought not to forget that these now overused τόποι were new and fresh when they first appear in ancient Greek literary sources. They might have lost their edge for us, but they could still hurt and bite twenty-five centuries ago.

To understand the bad reputation of ἔρως in ancient Greek culture one has to remind oneself that the vital importance attached to falling in love in our culture is something that is not shared by many other cultures. This does not mean that this is not a phenomenon recognized by other cultures. It seems to be more or less universal. People fall in love, act foolishly and are either able to consummate it or not. The way this phenomenon is interpreted and integrated into society, however, can differ widely. In our culture, falling in love is seen as the beginning of something beautiful, of a union between two people that, ideally, will last a long time. It is something that will provide the people involved with pleasure, companionship, all-round well-being. Even when it is a tempestuous affair, that fact is seen in a positive light, as a source of excitement and

enthusiasm in a generally dull life. Falling in love is also something to be desired, since it is the starting point of a process that will lead to all these blessings. Without it, one's life may feel as having been nothing more than a vast wasteland. Falling in love is also seen as normal occurrence in one's life. It might be extraordinary in its effects and in how it changes one's perspective and behaviour, but it is an expected event. People fall in love and that is how they find the one they are to share their lives with. Any unhappiness that might derive from this fact is not attributed to passionate love itself, but rather to unfortunate circumstances. Love, in this sense, is a positive, creative, beneficial force, even if its work might be hindered by a set of unforeseen circumstances.

For ancient Greek culture, however, falling in love was not normal or expected. It was rather as odd and extraordinary, as something that might happen to anyone, but that did not, as a rule, happen to everyone. Neither would it be considered a fundamental stage in the pursuit of a happy life, but simply as just another event. This event, however, would, more often than not, be responsible for unhappiness and disaster. There seems to have been little room to consider falling in love as something with a productive and positive social role. Marriage was, as has been the case for most of human history, not necessarily based on love and passionate feelings, but mostly on convenience, and was motivated, for example, by the need to produce legitimate offspring and establish a close union with another family. From a Greek perspective, ἔρως is more of a wild force to be tamed than a positive force to be enjoyed and used to one's advantage[83]. As such, the role of falling in love would be limited to personal satisfaction, either sexual or emotional. But even the ability to provide personal satisfaction would have been seen as scarce. One would have to go to considerable trouble to get some satisfaction, which, from the very nature of the attachment, would be short lived. In the accounts of love, there are more losses than gains. From the prevailing ancient Greek point of view, the foolishness of falling in love has no upside apart from its superficial charm.

The downsides of falling in love, however, are multiple and terrible. Ruin, shame, disease, madness, slavery and death: all of these are associated, in one way or another,

[83] In this I follow Thornton's (*op. cit.*) view, insofar as the author insists in the violent and destructive nature of ἔρως as understood by the majority of extant literary sources. For the use of violent and destructive images in early Greek poetry, see, e.g., LESKY, A., *Vom ἔρως der Hellenen*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976, especially 41ff.; CARSON, A., *Eros the Bittersweet*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1986; CALAME, C., I Greci e l'eros. Simboli, Pratiche e Luoghi. Roma/Bari, Laterza, 1992; CYRINO, M. S., *In Pandora's Jar*: *Lovesickness in Early Greek Poetry*, Lanham, University Press of America, 1995.

with the phenomenon of falling in love. Ἔρως makes one act foolishly and neglect one's duties as a citizen or a wife. As such, it corresponds to a violation of one's role within the community, thereby attracting social condemnation and shame. Ἔρως makes one lose control over oneself. It is a phenomenon in which the affected individual is no longer sovereign, but is rather under the domination of something else: ἔρως itself. For this reason, to be in love is something incompatible with the requirements and expectations of civic dignity. Ἔρως makes one dependent on another person in a way that cannot be recognized as absolutely necessary for one's life. It creates a hole in one's life that can only be fulfilled by the person one has fallen in love with. One needs that person: another instance of necessity in a life that, naturally, is already dominated by a number of other instances of necessity. But, in a culture that mostly does not recognize positive value to passionate attachments of this kind, this instance of necessity can only be seen as superfluous at best. The deferential way one acts towards the beloved is much too similar to slavery. The insistent need to be with the beloved, going as far as chasing him or her around, if that is possible, is much too similar to begging. As a powerful and uncontrolable force, ἔρως forces one to act in odd and damaging ways. Under the power of ἔρως, one looses sight of that which, when not under its power, one considers of utmost importance: family, friends, wealth and reputation. Under the power of ἔρως, one looses control over oneself and can be undone or even one can be undone or even commit the most dreadful acts.

> Αγ. ὃς σοῦ παρὼν ἤκουσεν ὡς ταύτης πόθῳ
> πόλις δαμείη πᾶσα, κοὐχ ἡ Λυδία
> πέρσειεν αὐτήν, ἀλλ᾽ ὁ τῆσδ᾽ ἔρως φανείς.
> (Sophocles, *Trachiniae*, 431-433)

Under the power of ἔρως, one feels pain as much as pleasure - but the pain endures, whereas the pleasure is fleeting. Or, as Sappho said, much more eloquently than anyone else has:

> Ἔρος δηὖτέ μ᾽ ὁ λυσιμέλης δόνει,
> γλυκύπικρον ἀμάχανον ὄρπετον.
> (Sappho, frag. 130)

Ἔρως is irresistible, impossible to fight against. And he is also γλυκύπικρον: sweet and bitter, in that same order[84].

The mainly negative view of ἔρως that predominated in ancient Greek culture is expressed through a multiplicity of metaphors. First of all, our sources insist on the idea of ἔρως as an objective and overwhelming power. As such, it was commonly understood as a god – and as a god that prevailed over all mortals and even all the other gods. The divine aspect of ἔρως was expressed through the deification of ἔρως itself or through the mythological figure of Aphrodite, in many sources understood to be his mother. The idea of either Ἔρως or Aphrodite as ruling over mortals and gods alike reflect the universal power of sex and passionate love[85]. Anyone can be their victim; anyone can be their prey. One is powerless to resist it. Even Zeus, the mighiest of all the gods can be subjugated by the powers of Aphrodite:

> δὸς νῦν μοι φιλότητα καὶ ἵμερον, ᾧ τε σὺ πάντας
> δαμνᾷ ἀθανάτους ἠδὲ θνητοὺς ἀνθρώπους.
> (Homer, *Ilias*, 14.198-199)

> Τὴν δ᾽ ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη νεφεληγερέτα Ζεύς·
> Ἥρη κεῖσε μὲν ἔστι καὶ ὕστερον ὁρμηθῆναι,
> νῶϊ δ᾽ ἄγ᾽ ἐν φιλότητι τραπείομεν εὐνηθέντε.
> οὐ γάρ πώ ποτέ μ᾽ ὧδε θεᾶς ἔρος οὐδὲ γυναικὸς
> θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι περιπροχυθεὶς ἐδάμασσεν
> (Homer, Ilias, 14.312-319)

Being the subjugator of Zeus, Aphrodite would, *a fortiori*, be the subjugator of mortals:

> γλύκηα μᾶτερ, οὔτοι δύναμαι κρέκην τὸν ἴστον
> πόθωι δάμεισα παῖδος βραδίναν δι᾽ Ἀφροδίταν
> (Sappho, frag. 102).

Ἔρως is also described in the same terms by Anacreon (frag. 12 Page, 1) as δαμάλης Ἔρως, the subduer[86]. As with Aphrodite, he can be described as ruling over gods and mortals alike:

[84] See CARSON, *op. cit.*, 3ff.; CYRINO, *op. cit.*, 136-138.
[85] See LESKY, *op. cit.* 9ff. See also: GOLLOB, H. *Die Metamorphosen des Eros*, Wien, Gerold & Co, 1958; FASCE, S., *Eros: la figure e il culto*, Genova, Edizioni Tilgher, 1977.
[86] See CYRINO, *op. cit.*, *passim*. Also: CYRINO, M., Anakreon and Eros Damales, *Classical World* 89 (1996), 371-382; THORNTON, *op. cit.*, 15.

ἠδ' Ἔρος, ὃς κάλλιστος ἐν ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι,
λυσιμελής, πάντων τε θεῶν πάντων τ' ἀνθρώπων
δάμναται ἐν στήθεσσι νόον καὶ ἐπίφρονα βουλήν.
(Hesiod, *Theogonia*, 120-122)

Ἔρως and Aphrodite can be terrifying and use violence to subdue mortals to their will. That is the case of Helen, in *Iliad* III. Having rescued Paris from his duel with Menelaus, Aphrodite comes to lead Helen to his bed. Helen resists, aware of the terrible consequences that her connection with Paris has been responsible for terribeal disaster of the Trojan War. But Aphrodite will not suffer resistance: she threatens Helen and frightens her into submission.

Τὴν δὲ χολωσαμένη προσεφώνεε δῖ' Ἀφροδίτη·
μή μ' ἔρεθε σχετλίη, μὴ χωσαμένη σε μεθείω,
τὼς δέ σ' ἀπεχθήρω ὡς νῦν ἔκπαγλ' ἐφίλησα,
μέσσῳ δ' ἀμφοτέρων μητίσομαι ἔχθεα λυγρὰ
Τρώων καὶ Δαναῶν, σὺ δέ κεν κακὸν οἶτον ὄληαι.
Ὣς ἔφατ', ἔδεισεν δ' Ἑλένη Διὸς ἐκγεγαυῖα,
βῆ δὲ κατασχομένη ἑανῷ ἀργῆτι φαεινῷ
σιγῇ, πάσας δὲ Τρῳὰς λάθεν· ἦρχε δὲ δαίμων.
(Homer, *Ilias*, 3.413-420)

Seen as a powerful, overwhelming force, it is not surprising that one of the most stricking epithets for ἔρως was τύραννος. This not only has the connotation of supreme power, but also of power acquired by force, a violent overtaking of sovereignty.

ἄλλως ἄλλως παρά τ' Ἀλφεῶι
Φοίβου τ' ἐπὶ Πυθίοις τεράμνοις
βούταν φόνον Ἑλλὰς <αἶ'> ἀέξει,
Ἔρωτα δέ, τὸν τύραννον ἀνδρῶν,
τὸν τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας
φιλτάτων θαλάμων κληιδοῦχον, οὐ σεβίζομεν,
πέρθοντα καὶ διὰ πάσας ἰέντα συμφορᾶς
θνατοὺς ὅταν ἔλθηι.
(Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 534-544)

σὺ δ' ὦ θεῶν τύραννε κἀνθρώπων Ἔρως
(Euripides, Frag. 136 (Nauck), 1)

The tyrannical power of ἔρως is related to its violent nature. The ancient Greek idea of ἔρως does not correspond to a sweet, kind and mellow entity. It is rather a violent

force that overcomes one and leads one to ruin and destruction. As such, it is often described using martial language. Ἔρως wages war against the mortals he overpowers and conquers[87].

Ἔρως Ἔρως, ὁ κατ᾽ ὀμμάτων
στάζων πόθον, εἰσάγων γλυκεῖαν
ψυχᾶι χάριν οὓς ἐπιστρατεύσηι
(Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 525-527)

Ἔρως ἀνίκατε μάχαν,
Ἔρως, ὃς ἐν κτήμασι πίπτεις,
ὃς ἐν μαλακαῖς παρειαῖς
νεάνιδος ἐννυχεύεις,
φοιτᾷς δ᾽ ὑπερπόντιος ἔν τ᾽
ἀγρονόμοις αὐλαῖς·
καί σ᾽ οὔτ᾽ ἀθανάτων φύξιμος οὐδεὶς
οὔθ᾽ ἁμερίων σέ γ᾽ ἀν-
θρώπων
(Sophocles, *Antigone*, 781-790)

A common martial image associated with ἔρως is the arrow. The arrow was a terrible weapon. It allowed killing from a great distance. In normal battle, one would confront one's opponent face to face, with the possibility of defending and fighting back. The arrow comes out of nowhere, unexpectedily. There is very little defense against it and very little opportunity to retaliate. Also, the wound caused by an arrow was very painful. The arrow pierces one's flesh and is built in such a way as to create the most damage possible going in and even greater damage if one attempts to get it out. Death could take a long time, as the wound gets more and more infected. As the real arrows, the arrows of ἔρως strike from afar, apparently out of nowhere. They pierce and wound the victim and he is left there to agonise.

Ζεὺς γὰρ ἱμέρου βέλει
πρὸς σοῦ τέθαλπται καὶ συναίρεσθαι Κύπριν
θέλει·
(Aeschylus, *Prometheus Vinctus*, 649-651)

καὶ κνώδαλα πτεροῦντα καὶ πεδοστιβῆ (1000)
†καρπώματα στάζοντα† κηρύσσει Κύπρις
†καλωρα κωλύουσαν θωσμένειν ἐρῶ†
καὶ παρθένων χλιδαῖσιν εὐμόρφοις ἔπι

[87] See CYRINO, *op. cit.*, 16-20, 76-79, 142-143.

πᾶς τις παρελθὼν ὄμματος θελκτήριον
τόξευμ᾽ ἔπεμψεν ἱμέρου νικώμενος· (1005)
(Aeschylus, *Supplices*, 1000-1005)

μήποτ᾽, ὦ δέσποιν᾽, ἐπ᾽ ἐμοὶ χρυσέων τόξων ἀφείης
ἱμέρωι χρίσασ᾽ ἄφυκτον οἰστόν.
(Euripides, *Medea*, 633-635)

The violence of ἔρως can be expressed with other metaphors besides the martial ones. It can be described as a pugilist:

φέρ᾽ ὕδωρ φέρ᾽ οἶνον ὦ παῖ φέρε <δ᾽> ἀνθεμόεντας ἡμὶν
στεφάνους ἔνεικον, ὡς δὴ πρὸς Ἔρωτα πυκταλίζω.
(Anacreon, frag. 396 Page).

Ἔρωτι μέν νυν ὅστις ἀντανίσταται
πύκτης ὅπως ἐς χεῖρας, οὐ καλῶς φρονεῖ.
οὗτος γὰρ ἄρχει καὶ θεῶν ὅπως θέλει,
κἀμοῦ γε·
(Sophocles, *Trachinae*, 441-444) [88]

Or it can be described as the wind that comes from the mountains[89]:

Ἔρος δ᾽ ἐτίναξέ μοι
φρένας, ὡς ἄνεμος κὰτ ὄρος δρύσιν ἐμπέτων.
(Sappho, frag. 47).

Or it can be expressed through the elaborate image of a smith that strikes with his hammer and then dips one into cold water[90]:

μεγάλωι δηῦτέ μ᾽ Ἔρως ἔκοψεν ὥστε χαλκεὺς
πελέκει, χειμερίηι δ᾽ ἔλουσεν ἐν χαράδρηι.
(Anacreon, frag. 413 Page).

A common epithet of ἔρως is λυσιμελής, loosener of limbs[91].

Ἔρος δηῦτέ μ᾽ ὁ λυσιμέλης δόνει,
γλυκύπικρον ἀμάχανον ὄρπετον.

[88] See JEBB, R. C. (ed.), *Sophocles The Plays and Fragments* V, *Trachiniae*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1892, *ad locum*; MACLACHLAN, B., To Box or Not to Box with Eros, Anacreon Fr. 396 Page, *Classical World* 94 (2001), 123-133.
[89] See also: ALCAEUS, 336; IBICUS, 286.
[90] See CYRINO, *op. cit.*, 116-117.
[91] See also: ARCHILOCHUS, 196. See CYRINO, *op. cit.*, 136; THORNTON, *op. cit.* 26-27.

(Sappho, frag. 130)

ἠδ’ Ἔρος, ὃς κάλλιστος ἐν ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι,
λυσιμελής, πάντων τε θεῶν πάντων τ’ ἀνθρώπων
δάμναται ἐν στήθεσσι νόον καὶ ἐπίφρονα βουλήν.
(Hesiod, *Theogonia*, 120-122)

This is an epithet ἔρως shares with other phenomena, like, for example, sleep:

εὖτε τὸν ὕπνος ἔμαρπτε, λύων μελεδήματα θυμοῦ,
λυσιμελής, ἄλοχος δ’ ἄρ’ ἐπέγρετο κεδνὰ ἰδυῖα,
κλαῖεν δ’ ἐν λέκτροισι καθεζομένη μαλακοῖσιν.
(Homer, *Odyssea*, 20.57-59).

The phrase "to loosen one's limbs" is used several times in the Homeric poems, applied to different phenomena. Famously, it is used to describe death, as when Deiphobus kills Hypsenor:

οὐδ’ ἅλιόν ῥα βαρείης χειρὸς ἀφῆκεν,
ἀλλ’ ἔβαλ’ Ἱππασίδην Ὑψήνορα ποιμένα λαῶν
ἦπαρ ὑπὸ πραπίδων, εἶθαρ δ’ ὑπὸ γούνατ’ ἔλυσε.
(Homer, *Ilias*, 13.410-412).

It describes the terrible effect of the Helen's beauty: the death of the warriors who died as a result of the Trojan War:

τῶ κέ με πόλλ’ ὤνησεν ἄναξ, εἰ αὐτόθ’ ἐγήρα·
ἀλλ’ ὄλεθ’. ὡς ὤφελλ’ Ἑλένης ἀπὸ φῦλον ὀλέσθαι
πρόχνυ, ἐπεὶ πολλῶν ἀνδρῶν ὑπὸ γούνατ’ ἔλυσε·
(Homer, *Odyssea*, 14.67-69)

It also describes the lust felt by the suitors before Penelope's beauty:

τῶν δ’ αὐτοῦ λύτο γούνατ’, ἔρῳ δ’ ἄρα θυμὸν ἔθελχθεν,
πάντες δ’ ἠρήσαντο παραὶ λεχέεσσι κλιθῆναι.
(Idem, 18.212-213)

Later in the same book, similar phrases are used to describe drunkenness and death:

αἲ γάρ, Ζεῦ τε πάτερ καὶ Ἀθηναίη καὶ Ἄπολλον,
οὕτω νῦν μνηστῆρες ἐν ἡμετέροισι δόμοισι
νεύοιεν κεφαλὰς δεδμημένοι, οἱ μὲν ἐν αὐλῇ,

οἱ δ’ ἔντοσθε δόμοιο, λελῦτο δὲ γυῖα ἑκάστου,
ὡς νῦν Ἶρος ἐκεῖνος ἐπ’ αὐλείῃσι θύρῃσιν
ἧσται νευστάζων κεφαλῇ, μεθύοντι ἐοικώς,
οὐδ’ ὀρθὸς στῆναι δύναται ποσὶν οὐδὲ νέεσθαι
οἴκαδ’, ὅπῃ οἱ νόστος, ἐπεὶ φίλα γυῖα λέλυνται.
(Idem, 18.235-242).

The use of similar phrases in this case suggests a very strong association between ἔρως and violent death. Loosening one's limbs does not necessarily suggest relaxation, as the association with sleep would seem to imply. The idea of loosening one's limbs seems to be related with the experience of losing one's strength, understood as losing one's life-force. As such, it is an experience common to different phenomena: not only sleep and drunkenness, but also death and love[92].

Ἔρως is also often understood as a disease[93]. As with disease, ἔρως is painful and causes suffering. It causes weakness and malaise.

ἐνταῦθα δὴ στένουσα κἀκπεπληγμένη
κέντροις ἔρωτος ἡ τάλαιν’ ἀπόλλυται
σιγῇ, ξύνοιδε δ’ οὔτις οἰκετῶν νόσον.
(Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 38-40)

ἀνθ’ ὧν οὐχ ὁσίων ἐρώ-
των δεινᾶι φρένας Ἀφροδί-
τας νόσωι κατεκλάσθη·
(Idem, 764-766)

ἐγὼ δὲ θυμοῦσθαι μὲν οὐκ ἐπίσταμαι
νοσοῦντι κείνῳ πολλὰ τῇδε τῇ νόσῳ,
τὸ δ’ αὖ ξυνοικεῖν τῇδ’ ὁμοῦ τίς ἂν γυνὴ (545)
δύναιτο, κοινωνοῦσα τῶν αὐτῶν γάμων;
(Sophocles, *Trachiniae*, 543-546)

The physical effects of the erotic disease are famously described in great detail in the celebrated "pathografic poem" of Sappho.

[92] See ONIANS, *op. cit.*, 127ff.
[93] THORNTON, op. cit., 33ff; FUNKE, H., Liebe als Krankheit in der griechischen und römischen Antike, in Stemmler, T. (ed.), *Liebe als Krankheit*. 3. Kolloquium der Forschungsstelle für europäische Lyrik des Mittelalters. Tübingen, Narr, 1990, 11-30; CYRINO, *op. cit.*, 2-6. LASSERRE, F., *La figure d'Éros dans la poésie grecque*. Lausanne, Imprimeries réunies, 1946, 107ff., WINKLER, J., *The Constraints of Desire*. The Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece. N.Y./London, Routledge, 1990, 82ff., CALAME, C., *I Greci e l'eros*, Roma/Bari, Laterza, 1992, 10ff.; BENEDETTO, V. di, Intorno al linguaggio erotico di Saffo, *Hermes* 113 (1985), 145-156.

φαίνεταί μοι κῆνος ἴσος θέοισιν
ἔμμεν᾽ ὤνηρ, ὄττις ἐνάντιός τοι
ἰσδάνει καὶ πλάσιον ἆδυ φωνεί-
σας ὐπακούει
καὶ γελαίσας ἰμέροεν, τό μ᾽ ἦ μὰν
καρδίαν ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόαισεν,
ὠς γὰρ ἔς σ᾽ ἴδω βρόχε᾽ ὤς με φώναι-
σ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἒν ἔτ᾽ εἴκει,
ἀλλ᾽ ἄκαν μὲν γλῶσσα †ἔαγε λέπτον
δ᾽ αὔτικα χρῶι πῦρ ὐπαδεδρόμηκεν,
ὀππάτεσσι δ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἒν ὄρημμ᾽, ἐπιρρόμ-
βεισι δ᾽ ἄκουαι,
†έκαδε μ᾽ ἴδρως ψῦχρος κακχέεται† τρόμος δὲ
παῖσαν ἄγρει, χλωροτέρα δὲ ποίας
ἔμμι, τεθνάκην δ᾽ ὀλίγω ᾽πιδεύης
φαίνομ᾽ ἔμ᾽ αὔται·
ἀλλὰ πὰν τόλματον ἐπεὶ †καὶ πένητα†
(Sappho, frag. 31)[94]

When the subject of the poem sees her beloved, she experiences a variety of anomalous, uncomfortable and painful bodily experiences. The heart races in her breast, she loses her voice and cannot move her tongue, she feels fire under her skin, she is unable to see and she can only hear buzzing, she is cold and sweating. She feels she is about to die. This is almost clinical description of the effects of ἔρως that strongly suggests the association between this phenomenon and disease.

More specifically, ἔρως is often associated with a specific kind of disease: μανία. The association between these two phenomena was such as to understand ἔρως as a kind of μανία.

ἀστραγάλαι δ᾽ Ἔρωτός εἰσιν
μανίαι τε καὶ κυδοιμοί
[Anacreon, 53 (Page)]

ὁ δ᾽ ἔχων μέμηνεν.
(Sophocles, *Antigone*, 790)

ὦ παῖδες, ἥ τοι Κύπρις οὐ Κύπρις μόνον,
ἀλλ᾽ ἐστὶ πολλῶν ὀνομάτων ἐπώνυμος.
ἔστιν μὲν Ἅιδης, ἔστι δ᾽ ἄφθιτος βίος,
ἔστιν δὲ λύσσα μανιάς, ἔστι δ᾽ ἵμερος
ἄκρατος, ἔστ᾽ οἰμωγμός.
[Sophocles, Frag. 941 (Radt), 1-5]

[94] See CARSON, *op. cit.*, 12-17; CYRINO, *op. cit.*, 145-154.

ἤρων· τὸ μαίνεσθαι δ’ ἄρ’ ἦν ἔρως βροτοῖς.
[Euripides, Frag. 161 (Nauck)]

The equation between ἔρως and μανία seems to have been more than just a way of speaking. The signs and symptoms of one were similar to the signs and symptoms of the other. One loses control over oneself in both situations. One behaves oddly when one is in love, as well as when one is mad. One goes against what would normally be consider one's better judgment when one is in love. The same happens when one is μαινόμενος.

ἀξιῶ δέ, ὦ βουλή, εἰ μὲν ἀδικῶ, μηδεμιᾶς συγγνώμης τυγχάνειν· ἐὰν δὲ περὶ τούτων ἀποδείξω ὡς οὐκ ἔνοχός εἰμι οἷς Σίμων διωμόσατο, ἄλλως δὲ ὑμῖν φαίνωμαι παρὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν τὴν ἐμαυτοῦ ἀνοητότερον πρὸς τὸ μειράκιον διατεθείς, αἰτοῦμαι ὑμᾶς μηδέν με χείρω νομίζειν, εἰδότας ὅτι ἐπιθυμῆσαι μὲν ἅπασιν ἀνθρώποις ἔνεστιν, οὗτος δὲ βέλτιστος ἂν εἴη καὶ σωφρονέστατος, ὅστις κοσμιώτατα τὰς συμφορὰς φέρειν δύναται.
(Lysias, *Contra Simonem*, 4)

The speaker of Lysias' *Contra Simonem* is a mature man that, due to his involvement with a boy, Theodotos, was dragged into a conflict with Simon. Accused before the Areopagus of having tried to kill Simon, the speaker is forced to defend himself by describing the offenses commited against him by the alleged victim. At the centre of this case is the pederastic relationship between Theodotos and the speaker. The speaker admits to have behaved in a way unbecoming a man of his age, but he justifies himself by the special circumstance of being in love. Being in love is presented as an explanation for behaving in a way that is not deemed socially appropriate. As is the case with μανία, ἔρως leads one to commit excesses and even crimes.

ἰδέσθω δ’ εἰς ὕβριν {72[ἀντ. ε]}72
βρότειον οἵαι νεάζει πυθμὴν (105)
δι’ ἀμὸν γάμον τεθαλὼς (107)
δυσπαραβούλοισι φρεσίν,
καὶ διάνοιαν μαινόλιν
κέντρον ἔχων ἄφυκτον, †ἄ- (110)
ται δ’ ἀπάται μεταγνούς†.
(Aeschylus, *Supplices*, 104-110)

πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ ὁ τὸν θεσμοθέτην πατάξας τρεῖς εἶχεν προφάσεις, μέθην, ἔρωτα, ἄγνοιαν διὰ τὸ σκότους καὶ νυκτὸς τὸ πρᾶγμα γενέσθαι.
(Demosthenes, *In Midiam*, 38)

As with μανία, ἔρως could be understood as a situation of diminished capacity, akin, as in the quote above, to drunkenness. The one who is in love is not in full possession of its capacities. He is, in a way, *non compos mentis*. As with μανία, ἔρως is seen as responsible for the greatest disasters and calamities.

πέρθοντα καὶ διὰ πάσας ἱέντα συμφορᾶς
θνατοὺς ὅταν ἔλθηι.
(Euripides, *Hippolytus* 542-544)

σὺ καὶ δικαίων ἀδίκους
φρένας παρασπᾷς ἐπὶ λώβᾳ·
(Sophocles, *Antigone*, 791-792)

Both μανία and ἔρως disturb one's φρένες. Both correspond to serious disturbances of φρονεῖν. Being lucid and sane was seen as incompatible with a perspective that put a beloved at the centre of the universe and that led its bearer to neglect everything in the name of that attachment.

ἔνθ’ ἔνι μὲν φιλότης, ἐν δ’ ἵμερος, ἐν δ’ ὀαριστὺς
πάρφασις, ἥ τ’ ἔκλεψε νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων.
(Homer, *Ilias*, 14. 216-217)

σὺ τὰν θεῶν ἄκαμπτον φρένα καὶ βροτῶν
ἄγεις, Κύπρι, σὺν δ’ ὁ ποι-
κιλόπτερος ἀμφιβαλὼν
ὠκυτάτωι πτερῶι·
ποτᾶται δὲ γαῖαν εὐάχητόν θ’
ἁλμυρὸν ἐπὶ πόντον,
θέλγει δ’ Ἔρως ᾧι μαινομέναι κραδίαι
πτανὸς ἐφορμάσηι χρυσοφαής,
φύσιν ὀρεσκόων σκύμνων πελαγίων θ’
ὅσα τε γᾶ τρέφει
τά τ’ αἰθόμενος ἅλιος δέρκεται
ἄνδρας τε· συμπάντων βασιληίδα τι-
μάν, Κύπρι, τῶνδε μόνα κρατύνεις.
(Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 1268-1281)

The intensity and lack of control that characterizes the experience of falling in love was commonly understood as being quite similar to the experience of being μαινόμενος. The relationship between ἔρως and μανία could be understood as a matter of degree:

ἐπιθυμίαν μὲν διπλασιασθεῖσαν ἔρωτα εἶναι, ἔρωτα δὲ διπλασιασθέντα μανίαν γίγνεσθαι.

(Prodicus, Frag. 7)

Ἔρως is desire doubled, ἔρως doubled is μανία. This correlation between desire, love and madness suggests that these are phenomenon of the same kind, only to be distinguished by their degree of intensity.

Falling in love was not seen as a normal and perfectly expectable occurrence, but rather as an abnormal situation and as a major disruption. The ordinary course of life was profoundly affected by it and someone whose life was dominated by ἔρως would be seen as falling short of what was expected from a respectful citizen. Instead of living his life according to the traditional values of civic ἀρετή, the lover will be attuned to something very different. The main focus will no longer be on building a reputation of civic excellence, on participating in communal life in a way that benefits the πόλις and himself, but will rather be on the ἐρώμενος. The lover forgets everything that is normally held dear in the name of the one he loves. Family, friends, the community, his own physical comfort and material prosperity are no longer what he needs to make himself happy. It is the beloved that he needs. But the need for the beloved only exists as a result of falling in love. Ἔρως creates a need that did not exist before, and this need is so overwhelming it makes all others seem insignificant in comparison. That an event such as this should be seen as a form of disease is not surprising. Nor is it surprising that it was understood, as we saw in the previous chapter, as an invading force, foreign to ordinary life and a severe cause of disruption. When ἔρως arrives, it arrives with overwhelming force and acts with extreme prejudice. It limits one's freedom of action by taking power in one's life. As such, it was described as τύραννος, the absolute master, but also the one that attains power by force; by the same token, the one who is under its pernicious power is regarded as a slave. These negative features of ἔρως, disease, violence, slavery, rejection of the community's values, turn the lover into an outsider. The lover is, in a way, no longer part of the community. He lives in a different world, a world where the beloved is the most important thing there is, a world where his behaviour makes sense. From the point of view of the community he must be out of his mind, he is μαινόμενος.

2.3. Alternative ways of understanding ἔρως: moderate ἔρως and ἔρως διδάσκαλος

This overwhelmingly negative view of ἔρως might correspond to the predominant perspective in ancient Greek culture, but it was not the only one. There were alternative ways of understanding this phenomenon that have to be considered in order to get a fuller picture. First of all, we should not ignore that, in spite of its bad reputation, ἔρως was recognized as a source of pleasure and sweetness. This perspective seems more akin to our own. Love is charming and delightful; it makes life more enjoyable; it provides satisfaction and happiness. It is the summit of all the pleasures of youth. This idea is famously expressed by Mimnermus:

> τίς δὲ βίος, τί δὲ τερπνὸν ἄτερ χρυσῆς Ἀφροδίτης;
> τεθναίην, ὅτε μοι μηκέτι ταῦτα μέλοι,
> κρυπταδίη φιλότης καὶ μείλιχα δῶρα καὶ εὐνή,
> οἷ' ἥβης ἄνθεα γίνεται ἁρπαλέα
> ἀνδράσιν ἠδὲ γυναιξίν·
> (Mimnermus, frag. 1).

The sweetness and charm of ἔρως is something even the proponents of the negative view are sensible to. More than that: they are vulnerable to it. The fact that it is sweet and charming and alluring is interpreted not at face value, but as part of its dangerous character. It is what it makes it so irresistable. But its sweetness, as Sappho expressed it in fragment 131, is full of bitterness as well. It is γλυκύπικρον: it starts sweetly, but leaves a bitter aftertaste.

Another alternative understanding of ἔρως is the idea of moderate ἔρως. This idea is most famously expressed by three odes in three Euripidean tragedies: *Medea* (627-644), *Hippolytus* (525-544) and *Iphigenia Aulidensis* (543-553)[95]. In these three odes, the idea of moderate ἔρως is set in contrast with excessive ἔρως. The latter is the source of madness, ruin and disaster; the former, the desired refuge from those excesses. However, moderate ἔρως is an aspiration shared by the choruses of these tragedies; it barely seems to be a reality. They ask for love to come moderately and gently, but most of the poems are dedicated to describe the effects of the excessive manifestation of ἔρως. More than a

[95] See also frag. 388 Nauck:
ἀλλ' ἔστι δή τις ἄλλος ἐν βροτοῖς ἔρως
ψυχῆς δικαίας σώφρονός τε κἀγαθῆς.
καὶ χρῆν δὲ τοῖς βροτοῖσι τόνδ' εἶναι νόμον
τῶν εὐσεβούντων οἵτινές τε σώφρονες
ἐρᾶν, Κύπριν δὲ τὴν Διὸς χαίρειν ἐᾶν.

real possibility, moderation seems to be the irreal aspiration of those who are confronted with the terrible effects of this phenomenon.

Another positive way of understanding the erotic phenomenon is expressed by the Euripidean phrase ἔρως διδάσκαλος, ἔρως the teacher. Rather than being seen just as the cause of disaster, it could be understood as opening up possibilities, in a way, as being the teacher of the one who is under its power. It shows the way and teaches how to face the challenges the lover has to face.

> ἔχω δὲ τόλμης καὶ θράσους διδάσκαλον
> ἐν τοῖς ἀμηχάνοισιν εὐπορώτατον,
> Ἔρωτα, πάντων δυσμαχώτατον θεόν.
> (Euripides, frag. 430 Nauck)

The teaching power of ἔρως could be extended to poetry: the lover now composes poems about his love.

> ποιητὴν δ’ ἄρα
> Ἔρως διδάσκει, κἂν ἄμουσος ᾖ τὸ πρίν.
> (Euripides, frag. 663 Nauck)

This idea of ἔρως as teacher could go as far as to be presented as a teacher of ἀρετή - an odd thing to say in a culture that would usually believe the opposite.

> παίδευμα δ’ Ἔρως σοφίας ἀρετῆς
> πλεῖστον ὑπάρχει,
> καὶ προσομιλεῖν οὗτος ὁ δαίμων
> πάντων ἥδιστος ἔφυ θνητοῖς·
> (Euripides, frag. 897 Nauck)

This seems to be a reference to what probably was the most influencially alternative perspective on ἔρως, παιδεραστία, and its pedagogical component, which will be the object of the following sections.

2.4. A peculiar form of love: παιδεραστία

For the purposes of this study, παιδεραστία is the most relevant alternative, positive, perspective on ἔρως. The relevance of παιδεραστία to this study is not limited to the fact that this is the specific modality of ἔρως portrayed in the *Phaedrus.* Rather, it

is παιδεραστία's cultural significance that makes it the perfect target of Lysias' and Socrates' first speech, as well as the ideal object of praise in Socrates' palinode. However, before we are able to understand παιδεραστία's importance and significance within the economy of the *Phaedrus*, we have to understand its peculiar characteristics and conventions. We will also have to understand that, as an institution, παιδεραστία was far from being unanimously praised and approved, and was rather the object of criticism and the subject of considerable debate[96].

[96] In fact, the debate regarding παιδεραστία is still going on in contemporary scholarship. Its quirks and specificities are still far from being fully understood and its oddity cannot and should not be underestimated. There are still many open questions regarding this cultural phenomenon. One of them, however, can be taken as more or less resolved: the presence of a sexual component. It is more or less consensual that the notion that παιδεραστία was a perfectly chaste and innocent relationship – innocent as in exempt from sexual desire – is to be rejected as innacurate. See, in this regard, BUFFIÈRE, F., *Eros adolescent. La pédérastie dans la Grèce antique*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1980. BUFFIÈRE takes as one of the basic assumptions of his extensive study on παιδεραστία that the attachment of the ἐραστής to the ἐρώμενος was akin to paternal or fraternal love. This assumption is even more extraordinary when we consider that Buffière's work is a close contemporary to Dover's seminal work on the same subject: DOVER, K., *Greek Homosexuality*, London, Duckworth, 1978. Dover openly accepts that there was an important sexual component to παιδεραστία. What he tries to do is understand it, decipher it, to the point of trying to sneak a peek into what went on behind closed doors, so to speak. Dover then inaugurated a tradition in contemporary scholarship of addressing this issue without the prudishness that characterised previous generations. That this prudishness had to do with the general moral condemnation of same-sex relationships that predominated *in illo tempore* goes without saying. And one needs only look at a calendar to realise that this change in scholarly approach coincided with the beginning of the reassessment of the social and moral validity of homosexuality which Western societies have been going through in the last few decades. In this context, the debates regarding the sexual component changed radically. It is no longer a matter of discussing if there was a sexual component, but rather of discussing if, how and in what circumstances it was consummated, as well as its significance. To be sure, these debates are not free from bias – but they are free from *that* specific bias, from the bias that tended to look upon the homoerotics of the Ancient as some sort of *locus immundus*, better to be avoided altogether. Perhaps one of the most tempting biases in discussing these issues is to look at them from the angle of the contemporary debates on homosexuality, and to use the sources as witnesses of some kind of golden age of homoeroticism. In other words, it is tempting to look at the homoerotic practices of the Ancient, of which παιδεραστία is the most salient example, as counterparts of contemporary homosexual relationships, overlooking the substantial and decisive differences between them. Another form of bias goes in the opposite direction: to emphasize the difference to such a degree that the homoeroticism of the ancient Greeks appears to us as something almost completely alien from what we are able to observe and experience. This becomes particularly noticeable when the sexual component becomes the central aspect of the approach. Rivers of ink flow in endless discussions on what *exactly* went on behind closed doors, as if we were able to lift the veil that the Ancients, in most cases, have drawn upon these matters – hence, for example, the debate surrounding the issue of intercrural sex. These rivers of ink turn into oceans when it comes to discussing the significance of whatever the butler might have seen through the keyhole of our historical sources – hence the debate around the active-passive dichotomy, and its allegedly momentous social and cultural importance. However, it is not our place to solve these matters, as they are well beyond the scope of this study. How exactly the ἐραστής and the ἐρώμενος sexually consummated their relationship is of little to no consequence for this study. What is of consequence is the simple fact that there was a sexual component, or, to be more precise, that at least one of the parties, the ἐραστής, was the bearer of a sexual desire towards someone who was free from such constraint, but was nonetheless expected to accommodate. Other questions regarding παιδεραστία can also be put aside, to a certain extent: questions on how socially widespread this practice really was, on instances of regional variation, on the causes or origins of this peculiar institution. These are also matters of secondary importance for our purposes. What matters the most to our study is παιδεραστία as a peculiar perspective on ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν; how it is constituted by a set of theses which justify παιδεραστία as a positive

For us to fully appreciate this oddity, however, we need to get rid a few potential misunderstandings. It is true that παιδεραστία is a form of homoerotic attachment, more

perspective on love, in the context of a civilization where love had such a bad reputation; but also what these theses say about the assumptions regarding a particular understanding of where φρονεῖν and, by contrast, μανία, reside. The rest, no matter how interesting, engaging or problematic it may be, will have to be seen as an accessory to these more relevant matters. The following are a mere sample of the vast bibliography on this complex subject: BETHE, E., Die Dorische Knabenliebe, *Rheinisches Museum* 62 (1907), 438-475; LASSERRE, F., Ἐρωτικοὶ λόγοι, *Museum Helveticum* 1 (1944), 169-178; REYNEN, H., Philosophie und Knabenliebe. Zu Plat. *Symp*. 183a, *Hermes* 95 (1967), 308-316; SÁNCHEZ LASSO DE LA VEGA, J., El Eros pedagógico de Platón, in FERNÁNDEZ GALIANO et al. 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specifically, a form of homoerotic attachment between persons of the male sex. This fact alone could potentially lead us to believe that παιδεραστία is the ancient Greek equivalent of modern male homosexuality. Such an understanding presumes that παιδεραστία is the exclusive way in which men in ancient Greece actualised their sexual attraction and erotic attachment towards other men. But the specificity of παιδεραστία forbids such an understanding. Παιδεραστία is, in its barest definition, a form of homoerotic relationship between an older adult male and a younger adolescent male. More than a form of sexual orientation towards one or the other gender, παιδεραστία is a peculiar cultural institution. It is a form of expressing and manifesting erotic desire through a variety of actions and behaviours, obeying specific rules and protocols. The term παιδεραστία covers a significant variety of different practices and conventions over time and space. Different regions of Greece seem to have had different customs and conventions regarding the acceptable way of engaging in this kind of relationship. Παιδεραστία, therefore, is not a monolithic concept, nor a completely stable and perfectly established cultural practice[97].

It is clear from the sources that other forms of male homoerotic attachment or desire were known. Male prostitution was practiced in Ancient Athens. Certain figures were the object of considerable contempt and ridicule for their homoerotic desires. A few homoerotic relationships between adults are sometimes mentioned. None of these forms of homoerotic behaviour correspond to παιδεραστία. The notion of παιδεραστία, therefore, and especially the Athenian variety, is much more restricted than the notion of homosexuality. Unlike homosexuality, which only differs from heterosexuality in the gender of the object of erotic desire, παιδεραστία is a way of understanding and experiencing ἔρως, which differs from other ways of experiencing ἔρως in many aspects. It is a more complex notion, with its assumptions, requirements and protocols.

It is clear, then, that even though the homoerotic nature of παιδεραστία may seem to us to be one of its most stricking characteristics, it would be a mistake to understand it as the Ancient World's equivalent of male homosexual relationships as they are practiced and understood in our own civilisation. There are, in fact, several significant differences between homosexuality and παιδεραστία. Modern homosexual relationships are

[97] For our purposes, the most relevant modality of παιδεραστία is the one practiced in classical Athens herself. We are lucky in that this is also the modality of παιδεραστία of which we know more about, due to the quantity and variety of sources. Perhaps because of this, Athenian παιδεραστία is also the one that appears to us as the most complex and problematic.

symmetrical in nature – in the same way heterosexual ones tend to be. The two people involved are in love with each other. There is a degree of reciprocity involved. A loves B and B loves A. In the case of παιδεραστία, that is not the case. In this, it follows the usual pattern of the ancient notion of ἔρως. Ἔρως describes the objective situation of being compelled into an obsessive attachment to someone that is seen as the best thing in the whole world. As such, there is nothing that might suggest that there is reciprocity. We should be aware of the fact that people often fall in love with people who do not reciprocate. Unrequited love is a phenomenon we are familiar with, not only, in many cases, as part of our personal experience, but also because it is a familiar cultural τόπος. There is nothing extraordinary in the idea of *de facto* non-reciprocal ἔρως. What is extraordinary in the ancient Greek conception of ἔρως and, *a fortiori*, παιδεραστία, is the fact that reciprocity is not seen as a requirement for the happy outcome of an erotic endeavour[98].

In order to make sense of this peculiarity, we have to understand another odd characteristic of παιδεραστία. Modern homosexual relationships are neutral regarding the age and age difference of the people involved: a significant age difference is neither necessarily excluded nor required. As with heterosexual relationships, one might be in love with someone younger or older. As with most heterosexual relationships, the age difference is usually small, but even when that is not the case, this is seen as an accidental feature of that specific relationship. In the case of παιδεραστία, the age difference is fundamental. One of the partners will be significantly older than the other. In the case of παιδεραστία, however, "significantly older" does not necessarily mean a great age difference in years. It rather means that one of the partners will be part of an age group still considered to be immature, whilst the other will be an adult. This might translate into an actual age difference of a few years or even decades, but the significant aspect is the fact that the older partner will already be a citizen, whereas the younger partner will not[99].

[98] This does not mean that we are dealing with cases of constraint or rape. That is not the case in παιδεραστία, though such a possibility is not to be excluded in other forms of erotic attachment. Παιδεραστία requires consent and willingness from the beloved, though not an erotic attachment.

[99] The younger partner would be an adolescent male: already pubescent, but not yet an adult. This is certainly the aspect of παιδεραστία that most shocks our modern sensitivity, which abhors sexual contact between adults and adolescents (and, *a fortiori*, children) of either sex. In modern times, many instances of παιδεραστία would be considered a form of sexual abuse and not a legitimate and acceptable form of erotic relationship.

This difference in maturity – which is also a difference in social status – creates an important element of asymmetry between the two partners. Socially, the adult partner would be of far greater importance, since he is already able to exercise its civic powers and duties fully. The importance of the younger partner is only potential: he will soon be a citizen. This, however, will apparently be counterbalanced by the effects of non-reciprocal ἔρως. The adult partner, the ἐραστής, will be the only one under the influence of ἔρως. This means that he will be obsessively attached to the younger partner, the ἐρώμενος. This obsessive attachment creates a situation of dependency, of inferiority. The ἐρώμενος is the one in possession and in control of what the ἐραστής sorely needs: the company and favours of the ἐρώμενος. The ἐρώμενος is the object of erotic attraction because he possesses something that justifies the ἐραστής' dependency: beauty. The ἐρώμενος' youth is associated with beauty. Youth is the period of life where the physical characteristics that make one beautiful, including the freshness, vigour and vitality associated with beauty, are more in display. If ἔρως seeks beauty, it is amongst the young that he will have to search[100]. In contrast, the possible beauty of the ἐραστής plays no role. The ἐρώμενος is the object of the attachment; he himself is not affected by ἔρως. The beloved does not desire the lover; but the lover desires the beloved.

That being the case, παιδεραστία is faced with a problem difficult to solve: how to justify an assymetrical and non-reciprocal erotic relationship. It cannot be based on constraint. The beloved's status as the son of a citizen and as a future citizen himself protects him from being constrained. He is neither a slave nor a foreigner nor a prostitute. He has to be treated with respect and decorum. In other words, in order to achieve that which the lover wants the most – expressed by the euphemistic χαρίζεσθαι – he has to persuade the beloved to yield to his advances. The status of the ἐρώμενος as a free young man, a future citizen, makes the subject of sex all the more awkward. The consistent use of euphemism and oblique references suggests that sex was, at the very least, something that was not to be mentioned directly in polite company. This somehow masks the sexual aspect of παιδεραστία – to the point that it has been interpreted by some as a completely chaste form of eroticism. It is clear, however, that sexual desire played a fundamental

[100] However, this also means that pederastic relationships are intrinsically ephemeral. The inevitable bodily changes the ἐρώμενος will go through will deprive him of the charms necessary to inspire an erotic attachment in the ἐραστής. This turns what could otherwise be seen as a cliché, the ephemeral nature of love, into a very concrete problem. See FOUCAULT, *op. cit.*, 258ff.

role. The ἐραστής desires the boy sexually and that is one, though not by any means the only, motive for pursuing the ἐρώμενος.

But sexual desire is assymetrical and unidirectional. The conventions of παιδεραστία suppose that only the ἐραστής, the one who is under the influence of ἔρως, feels sexual desire. The ἐρώμενος simply yields to the ἐραστής' advances and grants him the sexual favours he desires without, however, being affected by desire himself or displaying any sexual response. If this is true or not is impossible to tell. We have no inside perspective on what actually went on behind closed doors. The actual sexual activities engaged in within the context of pederastic relationships is still a matter of debate. We know even less, if anything, about how an actual ἐρώμενος would react at the moment of the ἐραστής' sexual gratification. What we know is how the ἐρώμενος was supposed to react: not at all. To achieve what he wants, the ἐραστής has to convince the ἐρώμενος that yielding to sexual advances will bring him more benefits than deciding not to. From the point of view of the beloved, this is a delicate affair. It is unclear how exactly this kind of arrangement was socially perceived in classical Athens. It seems that was met met neither with universal praise, nor with universal condamnation. It is clear, however, that not being parcimonious with one's favours during one's youth would be seen as a sign of lack of σωφροσύνη. This would damage the boy's reputation and, especially, his standing as a citizen, when that time arrived. So the beloved has to consider his options carefully and manage the situation in such a way as to take as much benefit as possible from it without incurring any potential reputational damages.

The beloved's motives to enter into a relationship will have very little to do with ἔρως. This is one of the features in which the Greek institution of παιδεραστία diverges most from our conceptions about love. The lover does not expect his beloved to be in love with him. Nor would the boy think of himself as in love with his lover. This does not mean that the beloved was not expected to have some affection towards the lover. But this affection was in no way considered similar to ἔρως and was usually referred to under the much more general designation of φιλία. Φιλία, despite being quite frequently translated has "friendship", has a much wider scope of meaning. It can designate the affection between friends, between family members, particularly parents and children. It also can be used to refer to relationships that can be based not in any particular form of affection, as the examples set forth are, but on mutual advantage. One's φιλοί are not just one's family, friends or the people one likes, but can also be the people to whom one owes

a debt of gratitude or to whom one is connected as a result of mutual services rendered. These two groups can and would most certainly overlap; not only are friends and family usually the givers and recipients of these services, but the giving and receiving of services may also produce an affectionate relationship[101]. The φιλία desired from an ἐρώμενος

[101] On the notion of φιλία, and its multiple meanings, in Ancient Greek culture, see, e.g.: KROLL, W., *Freundschaft und Knabenliebe*, München, Heimeran, 1924; CHASE, A. H., *Quomodo amicitiam tractaverint tragici Graeci quaeritur*, Harvard University, Cambridge (Mass.), 1930; DIRLMEIER, F. ΦΙΛΟΣ und ΦΙΛΙΑ in vorhellenistischen Griechtum, München, Druck der Salesianischen Offizin, 1931; KIENZL, P., *Die Theorie der Liebe und Freundschaft bei Platon*, Wien, 1941; LEVI, A., La teoria della φιλία nel Liside, *Giornale di Metafisica* 3 (1950), 285-296; REGENOS, G. W., Guest-friendship in Greek tragedy, *Classical Bulletin* 31 (1955), 49-52 and 55-56; REGENOS, G. W., Guest-friendship and development of plot in Greek tragedy, *Classical Bulletin* 32 (1956), 49-52; HOERBER, R. G., Plato's Lysis, *Phronesis* 4 (1959), 15-28; ADKINS, A. W. H., Friendship and self-sufficiency in Homer and Aristotle, *Classical Quarterly* 13 (1963), 30-45; KAKRIDIS, H. 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combined both these elements. It would be the expected response to the lover's qualities, to his courage and cleverness and social standing, but also to the services he would render him. These services or benefits correspond to what the lover can offer the beloved, to how the presence of the lover in the beloved's life can improve it. But the φιλία the ἐρώμενος would have for the ἐραστής is more than just gratitude. It would also have an important component of admiration. The ἐρώμενος yields to the advances of the ἐραστής that is most deserving, not just for what he can do for the ἐρώμενος, but also for his own personal qualities. It is therefore more than just gratitude.

In order to convince the beloved to consent to an erotic relationship, the ἐραστής has to present his case. He has to explain why and how gratifying the lover would contribute to the beloved's life. We should never forget that, according to the conventions of παιδεραστία, the beloved does not desire the lover, so the kind of services rendered will not be sexual in nature. In fact, the conventions of παιδεραστία seem to have no place for the possibility of ἐρώμενος getting any sexual satisfaction out of the arrangement: that is the exclusive domain of the lover. What the lover has to offer is of a didactic nature.

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Being a mature man, already a citizen, the lover will be in position to teach the beloved what he needs to learn in order to become himself a good citizen. The beloved is in the transitional stage of his life between childhood and adulthood. He is no longer a simple child, since he has grown and undergone some education; but he is not yet a full adult, nor, least of all, a citizen. The lover offers himself to guide the beloved through this transitional period. This guidance and this education does not seem to include any kind of specialized skills – though that possibility cannot be excluded, when the lover possessed such skills himself. The education offered was rather of a civic nature: by praising what was deemed worthy and censuring what was deemed shameful, the lover will teach the beloved the values of the community and help him become a better citizen.

παυσάμενος οὖν περὶ τούτων, ἤδη πειράσομαί σοι συμβουλεύειν ἐξ ὧν ἐντιμότερον ἔτι τὸν σαυτοῦ βίον καταστήσεις.
(Pseudo-Demosthenes, *Eroticus*, 34)

By offering his advice and guidance to the beloved, the ἐραστής presents himself as someone qualified to lead a young man towards ἀρετή and as the spokesperson of the values of the community. In other words, the ἐραστής presents himself as the bearer of φρονεῖν. As we have seen before, the notion of lucidity is commonly deformalized as the socially shared perspective of a given community. In ancient Greek culture, φρονεῖν would commonly be regarded as the attribute of a perspective that recognizes the same reality recognized by the community, that shares the same values and behaves in a way that the community considers reasonable and praiseworthy. The ἐραστής, according to the terms of παιδεραστία's didactic component, will not only be in possession of the values that are part of the socially shared perspective identified as φρονεῖν, but will be able to transmit them to the beloved and turn him into an excellent citizen. Better yet: the lover will not only be able to teach, but will be the best teacher possible. For only by convincing the beloved of the superlative excellence of his didactic ability will the lover be awarded the gratification he seeks, instead of being rejected for a teacher who might ask for a less onerous retribution.

From the point of view of the lover, this whole arrangement has obvious advantages. He will get the satisfaction of enjoying the company and favours of the one he is in love with. But παιδεραστία does not present itself as a matter of *quid pro quo*. It is not a business arrangement, though, as we shall see, it might be seen as such by some

of its detractors. The lover does not teach in order to have sex. The relation between the two facts is not presented as one of a cause and its direct effect. What motivates the lover to benefit the beloved with his advice and wisdom is the love he has for him. It is because he loves the beloved that the lover will do his best to do him as much good as possible. The best possible thing he could do to the beloved is to teach him how to be an excellent citizen. Therefore, that is what he will do. It is out of εὔνοια that the lover teaches the beloved. In the same way, it is not as payment for his teaching that the beloved consents to the lover's sexual advances. Sex is not the currency used to pay what would be considered as a very odd form of tuition fee. The beloved recognizes the value of the lover's advice. He recognizes the ἔυνοια that motivated it. And he repays those tender feelings by giving the lover what he yearns for, not out of any lustful or mercenary inclination, but out of φιλία for a man of such great abilities and of such a noble nature.

2.5. The controversy about παιδεραστία

What we have seen in the previous section was what we would call the official speech of παιδεραστία, i.e., what παιδεραστία says about itself to justify its place and role within the community. But, the simple fact that it needs to justify itself suggests that its value was not unanimously recognized. An institution that is accepted by everyone needs not present an apology: it just exists. As a social practice, it is not clear how widespread it was in Athenian society. Possibly, it was limited to a minority of aristocratic background or of aristocratic aspiration[102]. The picture is unclear and uncertain, especially since most of our sources are of aristocratic origin. Regardless of how widespread it was and how socially accepted it was, the fact is παιδεραστία was not universally praised. As a mainly positive perspective on ἔρως, ιt was susceptible to criticism and suspicion.

Παιδεραστία seems a rather striking development, when we consider that the prevailing tradition regarded ἔρως as a kind of μανία and, accordingly, someone in love as μαινόμενος. By presenting himself as someone able to give useful advice to the

[102] We must not forget that Greek pederasty seems to be imbued with aristocratic ethos. See, e.g., the speech of Pausanias in the *Symposium*. The official discourse of παιδεραστία tends to exalt the virtues of this practice to such heights that it turns into a mark of distinction. On the association between παιδεραστία and the social "elite" (and how this practice might have been the object of considerable hostility from people outside this "elite"), see: HUBBARD, T. K., Popular Perceptions of Elite Homosexuality in Classical Athens, *Arion* 6 (1998), 48-78.

beloved, the lover is claiming to be in possession of φρονεῖν. In the context of a culture that associates ἔρως with μανία to the point of understanding ἔρως as μανία, presenting an ἐραστής as the spokesperson of φρονεῖν seems odd and difficult to understand. If being in love, under the influence of ἔρως, was akin to being *non compos mentis*, the lover would be the person least able to perform any kind of didactical function. This is especially so if we consider that the kind of behaviour that characterizes being in love, in a culture mostly hostile or at least suspicion of this phenomenon, would be in obvious transgression of what the socially approved perspective deems to be appropriate behaviour. The situation of the lover would be the opposite of what is characteristic of civic dignity. As such, he is in no condition to guide the beloved towards ἀρετή. By believing in the lover and yielding to him, the ἐρώμενος is entrusting his future as a citizen, his reputation, his dignity to someone who is, by the very understanding of ἔρως that prevails in ancient Greek tradition, potentially regarded as μαινόμενος.

Another possible criticism regards not the nature of παιδεραστία as a form of ἔρως and, therefore, μανία, but rather the nature of the exchange of favours suggested by the pederastic erotic attachment. The simple fact that sex is the favour desired by the lover in this pedagogical relationship is enough to awaken suspicion. Other people involved in the education of the future citizen, the father and other family members, the family friends, etc., would obviously not require or even desire to be awarded a favour of such kind. And these are the most obvious people included under the label of φίλοι. There is no necessary connection between φιλία and consenting to have sex with someone. Even if φιλία requires favours to be reciprocated, the nature of those favours will not necessarily be – and most often will not be – of a sexual nature. To invoke a feeling of εὔνοια to justify one's intervention in another's life and then expect sexual favours in return is prone to raise suspicion that something else is at stake and that the explicit explanation is nothing more than an excuse. The whole situation could very well be interpreted as a *quid pro quo*, as a relationship of a mercenary nature. The beloved would pay for his education with sex.

This leads us to another criticism παιδεραστία was susceptible to: that it was just a mask of pretended respectability to cover something shameful. Beneath all the noble talk of εὔνοια and leading the beloved towards civic excellence with one's experience and advice, lurks the simple truth that the lover is obsessed with the beloved and wants to have him. The official speech of παιδεραστία only serves to make his efforts seem more

innocent, palatable and somewhat acceptable. Besides masking the merely lustful intentions of the ἐραστής, the official speech, with its emphasis on the boy's well being and self-interest, could be understood as a powerful tool to beguile naive young men and persuade them to grant their favours to someone not only undeserving, but incapable of doing them any of the good that was promised. But the nobility that παιδεραστία claimed for itself could also mask something more unexpected and contrary to παιδεραστία's own convention. It could be a way of giving the opportunity to wanton young men to gratify their baser instincts under the guise of a respectful relationship. A young man that yields to a lover and accepts to gratify him is putting his good name and reputation at risk.

Παιδεραστία had a difficult path to thread in classical Athens. Between the general suspicion regarding ἔρως that characterizes the prevailing tradition and the suspicion and criticism that can be levied against it, this is a form of erotic relationship that also had to deal with the delicate arrangement of enjoying the beloved without damaging his reputation. Regardless of these difficulties and in spite of the obscurities surrounding many of its aspects, παιδεραστία was probably the most influencially and culturally relevant positive perspective on ἔρως that can be found in ancient Greek culture. It put ἔρως under a different light. The pederastic ἔρως, according to the official speech, is not a destructive force that leads one to ruin; it is rather a constructive, positive force that inspires ἔυνοια in the lover towards the beloved and is the cement of a fruitful and beneficial relationship. It is ultimately irrelevant how much this rosy picture of παιδεραστία corresponds to reality. What is most important is that παιδεραστία itself is a way of thinking ἔρως as a beneficial force, a force with a positive role to play in people's lives and within the community.

3. Assessment. The significance of all these elements as background to the Phaedrus. Presupposition of the accusations against ἔρως and of its connection to μανία.

The short journey we have made so far has allowed us to gather a few elements that will be fundamental for our understanding of the erotic speeches of the *Phaedrus*. Since the erotic speeches were not produced in a vacuum, but were also the product of the culture they are a part of, this snapshot of the cultural background regarding the

phenomena of φρονεῖν, μανία and ἔρως provides us the context from which Plato took, altered and reworked several of the ideas and notions we will find later on in our analysis. It is now time to look back at what we have found out in this chapter in order to prepare for what we will find in the next ones.

Regarding the μανία-φρονεῖν oppositon, we observed that φρονεῖν, understood as lucidity, is seen as the default setting of one's perspective. This is a fact that is unlikely to be challenged in normal circumstances. It requires a special kind of perspective, a philosophical perspective, to cast doubts on the apodicticity of the normal, lucid perspective. We also observed that lucidity is usually deformalized into a specific perspective, a perspective that is considered not only to be lucid, but as the standard of lucidity itself. This deformalization is usually of a social nature. The lucid perspective is not individual, but shared by a community. This is true of the notion of φρονεῖν in ancient Greek tradition: it is the socially shared perspective that is identified as φρόνιμος. There is no room for an alternative perspective to be considered φρόνιμος as well. Any perspective that deviates from the socially shared one will be considered to be an instance of μανία. We also saw that φρονεῖν is an important element of civic dignity and how it relates to the idea of leading one's life well. Φρονεῖν being the normal, ordinary, correct way of understanding reality, μανία will be seen as the odd, the bizarre and the extraordinary. The μαινόμενος lives in a different world, and, therefore, is excluded from the community, not least of all because his or her behaviour does not conform to social norms.

Regarding the causes and explanations of μανία, we observed two main models: exogenous and endogenous. The exogenous model seems to have been the prevailing one in ancient Greek tradition. It consists on the idea that μανία is caused by the intervention of an exterior force of divine nature, a god or δαίμων. This model reinforces the idea of the oddness and extraordinary character of madness. But it also emphasizes human vulnerability and weakness, by portraying mankind as being at the mercy of vastly superior forces. The divine forces would use μανία as a form of punishment – a punishment where the punished is an agent of his own destruction. The endogenous model, on the other hand, posited an immanent explanation for madness. Chief amongst the representatives of this model is the medical perspective that pervades throught the *corpus hippocraticum*. The medical explanation of μανία is grounded on the constitution and operations of the body. In this sense, madness is a disease of somatic origin. Another

endogenous explanation of μανία does not necessarily concentrate on the body, but explains μανία – or certain instances of μανία – as resulting from conflicts within the soul. All in all, μανία is associated with disaster, destruction and disease.

In what pertains ἔρως, we observed that the prevailing ancient Greek tradition constrasted sharply with our own in seeing this phenomenon under a mainly negative light. Ἔρως is associated with violence, disease and destruction. It constrains and enslaves the one who is under its power. Ἔρως is a tyrannical and overwhelming force – a form of disease. It is especially associated with μανία, to the point of being considered a kind of μανία. As with μανία, ἔρως leads one to act oddly, against the norms of the community, to neglect those ends that a sane person should pursue, and pursue ends that a sane person would not attach importance to. The oddity of the one in love makes him more akin to a μαινόμενος than anything else. This negative reputation, however, did not exhaust all the perspectives regarding this phenomenon. Chief amongst the alternative, positive perspective on ἔρως was the one that belongs to pederastic ἔρως, which stressed the component of εὔνοια and the didactical purpose of this kind of erotic relationship.

It is this mixed, complex and confusing background that is at the heart of the erotic speeches of the *Phaedrus*. Παιδεραστία is one of its protagonists, since the ἔρως that they deal with is explicitly pederastic in nature. As such, this is an ἔρως that claims a positive role for itself. At the same time, however, the contradictions at the core of the pederastic tradition are brought to the forefront. The foolish, mad and destructive nature of ἔρως will play a fundamental role in the two first erotic speeches as a foil to the official speech of παιδεραστία. Furthermore, the notion of ἔρως as μανία will provide three different perspectives on the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition, which will culminate in the radical and extreme revision that we will find in the palinode.

Chapter III

Ἔρως the Unloved: The Speech of Lysias and the First Speech of Socrates

Love is merely a madness and, I tell you, deserves as well a dark house and a whip as madmen do.

Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act III, Scene 2

1. The Speech of Lysias

1.1. The "diagnosis" and the program of Lysias' speech

As a text within a text, the speech of Lysias plays a fundamental part in setting the themes and arguments of the *Phaedrus*. The starting point of the *Phaedrus* is the chance encounter between the eponymous character and Socrates. This encounter is only the beginning of something more significant, because Phaedrus is, in more than one way, the bearer of Lysias' speech. The epideictic nature of this speech is something we have already mentioned and analysed[103]. But it bears repeating that this is a text that tends to be overlooked and underestimated[104]. By this we do not mean that readers and critics tend to skip over it. Nothing as crude is being suggested. It is rather that Lysias' speech is usually seen as little more than a foil for the Socratic views on love in this dialogue, the finest expression of which can be found in the palinode. The main justification for such a cursory reading of this bit of the *corpus platonicum* can likely be found in the nature of the thesis that forms the core of this speech. Lysias' speech tries to defend a thesis that one can without a doubt consider odd and outlandish. This thesis is the object of mocking by Socrates himself (227c7ff.), but also, as the whole dialogue testifies, the object of considerable curiosity and interest[105].

The thesis of the speech is: "χαριστέον μὴ ἐρῶντι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐρῶντι" (227c6-7). A young man who is being sought after by several suitors should choose to gratify the suitor

[103] See Chapter I, p. 34ff.

[104] See, especially, HACKFORTH, 31.

[105] "ὦ γενναῖος. εἴθε γράψειεν ὡς χρὴ πένητι μᾶλλον ἢ πλουσίῳ, καὶ πρεσβυτέρῳ ἢ νεωτέρῳ, καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα ἐμοί τε πρόσεστι καὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς ἡμῶν: ἦ γὰρ ἂν ἀστεῖοι καὶ δημωφελεῖς εἶεν οἱ λόγοι. ἔγωγ᾽ οὖν οὕτως ἐπιτεθύμηκα ἀκοῦσαι, ὥστ᾽ ἐὰν βαδίζων ποιῇ τὸν περίπατον Μέγαράδε καὶ κατὰ Ἡρόδικον προσβὰς τῷ τείχει πάλιν ἀπίῃς, οὐ μή σου ἀπολειφθῶ."

who is not in love with him rather than the one who is. The euphemistic nature of the previous paraphrase attempts to match the tone of the thesis itself. "Being sought after" is a euphemism to refer to what is implied, but never explicitly stated, in the quote above: that the intentions of the ones doing the seeking after are at least partly of a sexual nature. "To gratify" (χαρίζεσθαι) has noticeable sexual undertones without being too explicit[106].

The situation described by this passage, which constitutes the presupposed existential setting of the speech itself, is one that would have been familiar to the contemporary readers of Plato, and has been examined in the previous chapter: παιδεραστία. The young man in question would have been the object of erotic interest from an older man, who would have strived to be awarded his favours. It is a situation likely characterized by the dominant presence of ἔρως. The suitor would be in love with the young man – or would at least claim to be in love with him in order to get what he wants. But Lysias disturbs this model by introducing a figure that breaks – though only up to a point – with the conventions of παιδεραστία: a suitor that is not in love, claims that he is not in love and uses that same fact as the main argument in his wooing speech. This different breed of suitor enters the competition for the favours of the young man in spite of the absence of ἔρως and, according to Lysias, this makes him the better choice. As we have seen before, this thesis is very much at odds with the conventions of ancient παιδεραστία. What Lysias is actually saying is that, in the context of pederastic relationships, the absence of ἔρως is to be preferred; or, to make the odd nature of this thesis even clearer: in the context of a situation that is characterized mostly by its erotic nature, in an endeavour that is widely known to be motivated primarily by erotic desire, someone that is not affected by ἔρως has the advantage.

Lysias' speech shows a great degree of hostility towards ἔρως. Since the beginning of the speech, ἔρως appears as a force whose only effect on life is to make it miserable. For the most part, the speech is a ψόγος of the lover as someone who has fallen under the tyrannical yoke of ἔρως. In this case, the phrase "tyrannical yoke" is more than appropriate, since Lysias' emphasizes the involuntariness and fortuitousness of falling in love and the fact that one of the critical human features ἔρως destroys or, at least, suspends, is the control one usually has over one's life. When love enters, all else yields

[106] As usual with most ancient Greek texts dealing with παιδεραστία, the sexual component is mentioned sparingly and by means of euphemisms, of which χαρίζεσθαι is one of the most common. See DAVIDSON (2007), 46-50.

to it, and it employs his newly found power not like a benevolent monarch, but always like an abusive tyrant. That being the case, this is a ψόγος of the lover *qua* lover, i.e., a ψόγος of ἔρως itself.

This speech, however, is not addressed to someone actually in love or who is in danger of falling in love. It is not a collection of sound advices with the aim of warning some young helpless soul against the violence of the enemy ἔρως. Nor is it a reproach against a lover for having been careless enough to have let himself become a prey to love. Rather, it is addressed to some unknown young man who has to choose between several suitors who are competing with each other for his favours and affections. Now, it is important to remind ourselves that the one of the most important characteristics of ancient παιδεραστία is the fact that it is fundamentally asymmetric. There is no expectation of reciprocity. By this we mean that the conception of ἔρως at stake in παιδεραστία is one in which the only person affected is the ἐραστής. The ἐρώμενος is the bearer of the enchantment, the beauty that is capable of awakening ἔρως; but the ἐρώμενος himself is not under the power of ἔρως. What the ἐραστής expects of the ἐρώμενος is not to be loved in return, but rather that the ἐρώμενος accepts his advances. It is clear from this model that, from a point of view that understands ἔρως as a form of μανία, the ἐρώμενος is not and will not become μαινόμενος. He will be, in spite of his young age, in possession of some degree of φρονεῖν – at any rate, a degree above the maddened ἐραστής.

In the context of Lysias' speech, this means that there is common ground between the boy the speech is addressed to and the non-lover. The common ground shared by the non-lover and the boy conjugates these two aspects: on the one hand, they are both in possession of a perspective that is not affected by ἔρως; on the other hand, they share an understanding of life. Neither the non-lover nor the boy is affected by ἔρως. It is assumed in the speech that the boy and the non-lover share a perspective that, due to being unaffected by ἔρως, is reasonable, sensible, attuned with the socially shared perspective. In other words, it is assumed that the boy is, to a certain extent, φρόνιμος, and can assess the situation of the ἐραστής from an outside, unaffected perspective.

But this common ground also plays a fundamental role in the building of the speech. The non-lover appeals to the boy's self-interest, even to the boy's φρονεῖν, and assumes from the start that they share the same basic perspective on life. It is this community of perspective that constitutes the foundation of the speech, a perspective that

is the bearer of a specific understanding of what life should be: a project ruled by self-interest and self-control. However, the point of view expressed in the speech is not just the point of view of someone in competition for a prize, the boy, but rather a point of view that, being putatively shared by the boy himself, would be common to everyone that is not under the influence of ἔρως. The speech claims to express a perspective that goes beyond the specific situation described in the speech, a perspective that is globally shared by all in the community that are not affect by the disturbing presence of ἔρως.

The speech is addressed to this young man with the purpose of influencing his decision and persuading him to choose the best suitor for him: the one not in love[107]. A "normal" suitor, i.e., a suitor that happens to be in love or, at least, claims to be in love, would say: "Please choose me, because I'm in love with you and I'll do everything to make you happy". Love would be invoked, among other things, as the motivating factor of the lover's benevolence towards his beloved. The non-lover, however, argues very differently: "Please choose me, because, since I'm *not in love*, I'm the one who can *really* make you happy". And he then proceeds to demonstrate his rivals' incompetence and unworthiness, or, more accurately, how being in love makes them incompetent and unworthy. Therefore, what concerns Lysias' non-lover is the effect of love, not only on the ones who are actually under its power, but also on their object of affection and desire. He is interested in love's effects in the life of the latter because he is the one he is trying to influence; he is interested in the same effects in the life of the former only so far as it reflects badly on them. But when he points out how miserable, contemptible and ridiculous lovers are, he is also showing how miserable, contemptible and ridiculous ἔρως made them and how miserable, contemptible and ridiculous the young man would become if he were ever to fall into their hands.

This hostility towards ἔρως probably seems stranger to us than it seemed to the Greeks. We tend to have a positive view of ἔρως as a beneficial force that drives people towards each other, a force that is responsible for a great degree of human happiness, or even the greatest form of human happiness. This, of course, does not mean we are totally

[107] Or, to use Griswold's (45) forensic metaphor, "The boy is put in the position of an impartial judge, the lover in the position of the defendant, and the nonlover in that of both the prosecution and the plaintiff." The boy, however, is not supposed to be an "impartial judge" – he is judging *in causa sua*, since what is at stake is his own self-interest. In this respect, Burger's political image is perhaps more apt: the boy's position is analogous to the demos being wooed by an orator. See BURGER, R., *Plato's Phaedrus. A Defense of a Philosophic Art of Writing*, Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 1980, 26.

oblivious to the troubles ἔρως can bring us, but its force is usually seen as such a strong torrent of blessings that all these troubles become insignificant in comparison. If being in love, supposedly the cause of so much happiness, is, as we tend to believe, one of the most important goals in life, how can someone produce a speech as Lysias', a speech that can be seen as an exercise in ἔρως-bashing? In a culture like ours, this would not seem to make much or any sense. However, as we have seen in the previous chapter, Greek culture does not seem to have had such favourable views on love. The dominant view of ἔρως is that it is a destructive power. It is difficult to find in early Greek literature examples of the laudatory view of love so common in our own culture. However, it would be enough to simply browse through early lyric poetry, through Homer, through several of the extant tragedies to find several examples of the destructive power of ἔρως. In these sources, ἔρως is usually a form a disease, of madness, a power that deprives its victim of control over his life, a tyrannical invader, and the cause of suicides, murders and wars, a savage power no one can ever control. This, of course, is a one-sided view: we can also find some more favourable perspectives on love. But the fact is that the favourable perspective is not only overwhelmed by the other one, but also usually seems to have an apologetic tone. It usually takes the form of a defence of love against its numerous and insistent detractors[108], or is presented as a better alternative to the normal erotic destructive experience[109]. Since the normal Greek perspective on ἔρως was a negative one, Lysias' speech does not appear that odd. In fact, it feeds on common opinion and, to some extent, it seems to reproduce the way most of his contemporaries would see ἔρως. If we read the speech against this background, some of its assertions and arguments may start to become normal and reasonable.

This, of course, does not cancel the speech's strangeness. It only changes in what way it is strange. It is not strange because of its negative opinion on ἔρως; it is strange because it is a wooing speech reproaching ἔρως. As we have seen before, there is an inherent conflict between the speech's content and its form. A wooing speech is usually all about ἔρως; its purpose is to seduce the one it is addressed to and claiming to be in love is a fundamental aspect of its argumentative structure. What its author wants is to gain his beloved's affection and favours. In these circumstances, ἔρως is presented as a blessing and even more ridiculous to speak of oneself as a poor wretch suffering under

[108] The speeches of the *Symposium* are examples of this, as is the palinode.
[109] On the theme of moderate ἔρως, see chapter II, p.143ff.

the awful tyranny of a monstrous lord. A “normal” wooing speech could not but sing the praises of ἔρως and promise the object of one’s desire all the happiness available to man. “Through that love you will acquire the greatest benefits of all” – this is what a “normal” suitor would say to his beloved. And he would add that it is because he is in love that he is most equipped to shower his beloved with the greatest goods. Lysias’ non-lover inverts this point: it is, in effect, because *he is not* under the power of ἔρως that he can provide the young man he is trying to persuade with all those blessings lovers usually promise. Lysias’ non-lover desires the young man, just as lovers do, but he is not *in love*, as we would say. And it is precisely because he is *out of love* that he has the ability to be of any benefit to the young man. To argue for this point he has to compose a kind of ψόγος of the lover and, consequently, a ψόγος of ἔρως itself. Therefore, he has to write a speech that, in a certain sense, is an erotic speech – because he is trying to seduce someone – reproaching ἔρως.

However, Lysias is not just asserting dogmatically that the non-lover is to be preferred to the lover. He does not just repeat, to paraphrase the sheep from Orwell's *Animal Farm*, "non-lover good, lover bad". He is using arguments to back his thesis. He is engaging in a form of persuasion, albeit, as we have seen before, of an epideictic nature. The speech is not, in fact, trying to persuade a real young man to really follow the advice he is giving. The speech inhabits the realm of fiction. Everything about it is fictional: the setting, the speaker, the rival and the recipient. But, as with good fiction, it makes use of real life elements in order to be plausible, convincing and engaging. It might present us with an odd view of παιδεραστία, but the main aspects of this institution, although distorted, are still recognizable. It might be addressed to a young man that never was, but there is nothing unlikely about the defining traits of his character or his situation. In fact, this could be any contemporary young man. As for the speaker, the implausibility of this character is made almost plausible by the arguments used by Lysias and by his avoidance of the question that immediately arises on any reader's mind: if ἔρως does not play a role here – not even nominally, why is he a suitor?

In fact, this constitutes what we could designate as the blind spot of the speech, a blind spot Lysias strategically avoids. The motivations of the ἐραστής, as portrayed by the fictional speaker, are clear: he is in love. But the non-lover is not affected by ἔρως. In this he is completely different from the lover. But in at least one respect the non-lover wants the same as the lover: to be gratified by the young man he is wooing. The

χαρίζεσθαι is therefore also a motivation for the non-lover. This makes him, to a certain extent, also a lover, but of a different kind.

As we have seen before, ἔρως is an equivocal notion. It can mean, for example the obsessive passion that the ἐραστής has for his ἐρώμενος (something that can be recognised as "being in love"), with all the degrees and nuances possible in such a complex phenomenon. But it can also mean, simply, to have a specific desire and, in particular, sexual desire. The fictional speaker of this speech is affected by ἔρως in the latter sense. The fact that the non-lover and the lover share this same motivation has some interesting consequences. Firstly, this means that the sexual component can be isolated from the other components of the phenomenon ἔρως, understood as passionate love. Secondly, it means that the sexual component, at least in the economy of Lysias' speech, is not necessarily affected by the madness of ἔρως. What Lysias shows is that there is a way in which one can be gratified that does not entail, and is not motivated by, the madness that is ἔρως. The lover is not mad because he wants sex; that may actually be the least mad thing about him. The distinction between lover and non-lover in what regards the sexual component depends, as we shall see, on *how* and *in exchange for what* the χαρίζεσθαι is achieved, not on the presence or absence of the desire for it.

The portrait of the lover, on the other hand, will be shown to be much more plausible in the context of ancient Greek culture than in our own. This is the result of the overall negative perspective on ἔρως that seems to dominate the Greek view of this phenomenon, in sharp contrast to our own. In a culture that views love as a disease or as an invading force that causes suffering and ruin to the one afflicted by it, a portrait of the lover as diseased and out of control individual, as someone that can only bring trouble to the life of the one he loves is not at all implausible. A perspective hostile to ἔρως is not, however, exclusive to ancient Greek culture[110]. Even our own culture, where the mainstream dominant perspective understands love as a predominantly positive force and an important life goal, contains different views. It is not absurd to understand falling in love as a form of madness, considering the disruption it causes and massive change in perspective it operates. Nor is it absurd to view decisions made while in love as being disastrous or just simply wrong. According to this point of view, the disturbance of

[110] See, for example, NICHOLSON, G., *Plato's* Phaedrus*: the Philosophy of Love*, West Lafayette, Indiana, Purdue University Press, 1999, 116-118, where the author makes a parallel between this particular perspective on love and Jane Austen's *Persuasion*.

lucidity that corresponds to being in love is something altogether undesirable and to be avoided as much as possible, lest it destroy the sensible way of life that is thought of as the ideal. The happiness and exhilaration that is concomitant with being successful in love can reasonably be interpreted as a form of dangerous charm, as a wolf in sheep's clothing.

In spite of the epideictic nature of the speech, and even because of it, Lysias has based his arguments on the predominant negative perspective and makes full use of it. He associates being in love with some of the least desirable traits in an Athenian citizen. The lover's condition is put as far away from civic ἀρετή as possible. For that purpose, in addition to the diagnosis regarding being in love in particular, he makes use of a specific view of what constitutes civic excellence, of those virtues that are desirable in an Athenian citizen and, by extension, in an ἐραστής. Furthermore, this image of what a citizen should be, this ideal of Athenian manhood, cannot be dissociated from a specific perspective on the φρονεῖν a citizen is assumed to be the bearer of. If we consider that the whole institution of παιδεραστία finds its justification, in the context of a culture generally hostile to ἔρως (or, from their perspective, to which ἔρως is hostile), in its supposed educational purpose, then the claim that an ἐραστής is, by virtue of the effects of ἔρως, deprived of φρονεῖν destroys any pretension of social acceptability παιδεραστία might have. Even more than that: the fact that the ἐραστής lacks φρονεῖν makes him completely disqualified to fulfil the pedagogical mission assigned to him by the conventions of παιδεραστία.

In order to defend a difficult thesis, Lysias has to employ a variety of complex notions and ideas, in surprising and ingenious ways. The purpose of an epideictic speech might be to show off one's rhetorical abilities, but these abilities require the use and manipulation of notions and ideas, arguments and thoughts, that are themselves potentially valid and fertile material for philosophical enquiry. Either explicitly or implicitly, the speech of Lysias has to deal with a complex set of ideas, most of which are derived from the conventional social values held at that time and place – clever distortions and rhetorical twists notwithstanding. It is from the identification and analysis of these ideas and the way they are used in the speech that we are going to extract the main features of a specific perspective on ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν to be held in contrast with the ones presented in Socrates' two speeches. This means we should contemplate the hypothesis that it not only contains some theses about these matters, albeit not discussed in a philosophical and systematic fashion, that constitute some sort of diagnosis, but that it

also presents and proposes, just like Socrates' speeches, some sort of existential programme, i.e., a way of life.

1.2. The argumentative structure

It is difficult to find an organization in the argumentative structure of this speech[111]. In fact, we encounter this very same criticism, expressed by Socrates himself, in the second part of *Phaedrus*, when Lysias' speech is compared to the epigram inscribed on the tomb of Midas the Phrygian, the lines of which can be read in whatever order (264c6-e3)[112]. The interchangeability of the lines is emphasized in order to show the lack of structure of the epigram. By humorously comparing the speech to this epigram, Socrates points out that one cannot find in Lysias' speech an organizing principle other than the author's fancy. The elements of the speech "seem to have been thrown at random" – χύδην δοκεῖ βεβλῆσθαι (264b2)[113]. Apparently, there is little or no articulation between the successive arguments presented and it is indeed very easy for a less attentive reader to get lost in this seemingly chaotic jungle of arguments. Lysias' speech can be read as the joint portrait of two characters, the lover, and his antagonist, the non-lover. However, the speech is built from the point of view of the antagonist and completely biased towards him. Throughout the whole speech each of these characters is compared to the other, point by point. Each point made about the lover is counterbalanced by one made about the non-lover. The non-lover is always seen under a positive light and the lover is always the object of reproach. In a way, this a speech built of two parallel and opposite speeches: on the one hand, a ψόγος of the lover, on the other, an ἐγκώμιον of the non-lover. But these

[111] HACKFORTH, 31: "little or no plan is discernable". BEETS, M. G. J., Words: A Companion to Plato's Phaedrus, Amsterdam, Duna, 1999, 38, refers to Lysias' "sloppy thinking and imperfect knowledge of the subject". See also RITTER, 11; GRISWOLD, 50; ROWE, 143-145; MOUZE, L. (ed.), *Platon. Phèdre*, Paris, Livre de Poche, 2007, 65f.; YUNIS, 97f. Robin (LXIV-LVIII), however, finds a structure "divisé en quatres parties, plus une conclusion" (LXV). See also SALA. 59ff., especially 61 n.8; SALES I CORDECH, J., MONTSERRAT-MOLAS, J., Sobre el Logos de Lísias al Fedre, in CARVALHO, M. J., CAEIRO, A. C., TELO, H. (ed.), *In the Mirror of the Phaedrus*, Sankt Augustin, Academia Verlag, 2013, 63-75, especially 66f.

[112] "σκέψαι τοίνυν τὸν τοῦ ἑταίρου σου λόγον εἴτε οὕτως εἴτε ἄλλως ἔχει, καὶ εὑρήσεις τοῦ ἐπιγράμματος οὐδὲν διαφέροντα, ὃ Μίδᾳ τῷ Φρυγί φασίν τινες ἐπιγεγράφθαι. (…) ὅτι δ' οὐδὲν διαφέρει αὐτοῦ πρῶτον ἢ ὕστατόν τι λέγεσθαι, ἐννοεῖς που, ὡς ἐγᾦμαι." For the criticism of the repetiveness of Lysias' speech, see page X below.

[113] 264b2. The translation of χύδην as "at random" (following Rowe) or "at haphazard" (Hackforth), fails to express the ideas that the derivation from the verb χέω entails. This verb, meaning to pour (water, for example) or to spill can be used to describe the flowing of waters or the heaping up of earth or any other material. Hence Thompson's suggestion: "helter-skelter, like rubbish shot from a cart" (THOMPSON, W. H. (ed.), *The Phaedrus of Plato*, London, Whittaker & CO., 1868, *ad locum*).

two speeches are interwoven with each other; each thread of one is matched by a thread of the other. In order to make some sense of this difficult text, we will first catalogue Lysias' arguments. Then, we will try to understand the connection between them and what conception of ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν is at stake here.

The non-lover begins his speech (230e6ff.) by invoking both his and the boy's advantage (συμφέρον), a theme that, as we will see, is of fundamental importance. Immediately after this, he addresses a fundamental objection: if he is not in love, he has no business in establishing a relationship with the boy (231a1). The non-lover has to defend himself; his defence is twofold: he attacks the lover by showing his disadvantages, and then proceeds to show how the non-lover has nothing but benefits to give. A lover, he states, can do good things, but he later regrets it. This is due to the transient nature of every erotic attachment – or, as the speaker puts it, of the ἐπιθυμία (231a4)[114]. In contrast, no such thing can happen to a non-lover. The reason for this is that, whereas the lover does good things to the boy under constraint (ὑπ' ἀνάγκης), the non-lover does it of his own accord, because he considers that, in doing so, he is conferring upon himself the greatest goods (231a6)[115]. The lover's situation could not be any more different: ἔρως is the cause of injury and trouble. In love's business account, a lover reckons all of this as benefits done to his beloved and does not repay him what really is due. Free from all these troubles, a non-lover cannot but willingly do everything to please the boy (231a7-b7)[116]. And the speaker adds an argument from probability: if a lover asserts that he loves so much his beloved that he is willing to incur other people's hatred to please him, then he will eagerly do his present beloved ill, if that will please his future beloved. In this short segment of the speech (230e6-231d5) we can find several interesting features: 1. the emphasis on love's transient nature; 2. the focus on pederasty as something that must be beneficial to the boy; 3. the description of ἔρως as ἐπιθυμία; 4. the characterization of the ἐρῶν as someone under constraint and unable to manage his own life and to choose what is best for himself; 5. the depiction of ἔρως as a destructive, though fugacious, force in

[114] "ὡς ἐκείνοις μὲν τότε μεταμέλει ὧν ἂν εὖ ποιήσωσιν, ἐπειδὰν τῆς ἐπιθυμίας παύσωνται: τοῖς δὲ οὐκ ἔστι χρόνος ἐν ᾧ μεταγνῶναι προσήκει."
[115] "οὐ γὰρ ὑπ' ἀνάγκης ἀλλ' ἑκόντες, ὡς ἂν ἄριστα περὶ τῶν οἰκείων βουλεύσαιντο, πρὸς τὴν δύναμιν τὴν αὑτῶν εὖ ποιοῦσιν."
[116] "ἔτι δὲ οἱ μὲν ἐρῶντες σκοποῦσιν ἅ τε κακῶς διέθεντο τῶν αὑτῶν διὰ τὸν ἔρωτα καὶ ἃ πεποιήκασιν εὖ, καὶ ὃν εἶχον πόνον προστιθέντες ἡγοῦνται πάλαι τὴν ἀξίαν ἀποδεδωκέναι χάριν τοῖς ἐρωμένοις: τοῖς δὲ μὴ ἐρῶσιν οὔτε τὴν τῶν οἰκείων ἀμέλειαν διὰ τοῦτο ἔστιν προφασίζεσθαι, οὔτε τοὺς παρεληλυθότας πόνους ὑπολογίζεσθαι, οὔτε τὰς πρὸς τοὺς προσήκοντας διαφορὰς αἰτιάσασθαι: ὥστε περιῃρημένων τοσούτων κακῶν οὐδὲν ὑπολείπεται ἀλλ' ἢ ποιεῖν προθύμως ὅτι ἂν αὐτοῖς οἴωνται πράξαντες χαριεῖσθαι."

the life of the lover, but whose ruinous consequences can be felt by the boy long after the erotic attachment has passed.

All these features are powerful strokes added to the portrayal of the lover as a character who can bring nothing but trouble to the boy, since love only brings hardship and destruction to the lover's life. This is explicitly stated immediately afterwards (231c7-d1)[117] when the speaker describes the lover's condition as a συμφορά, a misfortune so great no one knowledgeable would even try to defend him against. This misfortune is further described as a νόσος[118], in contrast with the condition known as σωφροσύνη, a situation in which the lover thinks/perceives/conceives badly, in which he is unable to master himself (231d2-d4)[119]. This passage adds to the gloomy description of love's effects on the lover. It also seems to be a development of the previous point on love's constraint and the lover's mismanagement of his own life. Ἔρως is a disease. As a disease, it is expressly contrasted with σωφροσύνη. When the speaker establishes the opposition between νόσος and σωφροσύνη (or, to be more accurate, νοσεῖν and σωφρονεῖν) and further relates νόσος with κακῶς φρονεῖν and the lack of self-control (231d3), he is sketching a portrait of the lover as someone who is completely under the control of a foreign destructive power. The lover is not responsible for his actions, because he is being dominated by ἔρως. This condition turns the lover into a disreputable and untrustworthy person and emphasizes the point made earlier (231a3) about his change of heart once his erotic attachment subsides and he restarts to εὖ φρονεῖν.

The next argument may at first strike us as odd (231d6-e2)[120]: it is more convenient to the boy to choose from amongst the non-lovers than amongst the lovers, for the simple reason that the former are more numerous than the latter. This seems to be a silly argument, but is quite in consonance to the speech's generally pragmatic tone. From the start, this speech is oriented by the principle of self-convenience. It is an advertising text and, as such, it shows relentlessly in what ways choosing the product it is advertising for will contribute to the boy's welfare. It is assumed from the very start of

[117] "καίτοι πῶς εἰκός ἐστι τοιοῦτον πρᾶγμα προέσθαι τοιαύτην ἔχοντι συμφοράν, ἣν οὐδ' ἂν ἐπιχειρήσειεν οὐδεὶς ἔμπειρος ὢν ἀποτρέπειν;"

[118] The word νόσος can mean disease or illness, but can have the more specific meaning of what we would call "mental disease", i.e., μανία. See Chapter II, p. 98ff..

[119] "καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ ὁμολογοῦσι νοσεῖν μᾶλλον ἢ σωφρονεῖν, καὶ εἰδέναι ὅτι κακῶς φρονοῦσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ δύνασθαι αὑτῶν κρατεῖν"

[120] "καὶ μὲν δὴ εἰ μὲν ἐκ τῶν ἐρώντων τὸν βέλτιστον αἱροῖο, ἐξ ὀλίγων ἄν σοι ἡ ἔκλεξις εἴη: εἰ δ' ἐκ τῶν ἄλλων τὸν σαυτῷ ἐπιτηδειότατον, ἐκ πολλῶν· ὥστε πολὺ πλείων ἐλπὶς ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς ὄντα τυχεῖν τὸν ἄξιον τῆς σῆς φιλίας."

the speech that the criterion for choosing a suitor must be the boy's own self-interest. So, it is obviously more convenient if he can choose amongst a large number of worthy suitors than amongst a small number of unworthy ones. Having more to choose from capitalizes his odds of finding just the one who can best improve the boy's life. This is what nowadays we call "freedom of choice".

The next set of arguments (231e3ff.) is concerned with the effect of the lover on the boy's reputation[121]. The non-lover assures the boy of his discretion: he can choose what is best (τὸ βέλτιστον) over fame (δόξα) and, whenever he is seen in the boy's company, nobody will suspect there is between them a relationship of a sexual nature. This discretion is contrasted to the lovers' lack of self-control also in this respect; they are proud (φιλοτιμουμένους) of their achievement and are eager to show everybody their success (232a1). Besides, even if they were able to keep quiet, everybody will know what happened or is about to happen whenever they are seen with their ἐρώμενοι. All of these cautions show us how fragile and precious a boy's reputation could be, and how careful he had to be in order to avoid bringing shame upon himself. This passage clearly hints at the fact that there was some degree of shame attached to the act of yielding to a suitor. This emphasizes the need for careful deliberation before choosing whom to yield and how ruinous the consequences of a bad decision could be. A boy with a bad reputation would hardly be able to garner any respect from his fellow-citizens once he came of age, and this would be an insurmountable obstacle to his future civic and political ambitions.

There is much at stake for the boy. In exchange for all the promised benefits, he gives what Lysias euphemistically names "ἃ περὶ πλείστου ποιεῖ" (232c1), "that to which you give the utmost importance", a reference to the sexual nature of this kind of relationship. This makes the boy worry about the stability of the relationship; if he is to put so much at stake, he needs to have some assurance of its meaningfulness and stability. In this passage, the speaker implies that the boy (wrongly) expects ἔρως to be a stabilizing factor in the relationship. The non-lover argues that ἔρως is quite the opposite. Lovers are suspicious, jealous, easily hurt and offended; they want to keep their beloved isolated, out of fear of being supplanted by another man. They want to deprive the beloved of their

[121] "εἰ τοίνυν τὸν νόμον τὸν καθεστηκότα δέδοικας, μὴ πυθομένων τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὄνειδός σοι γένηται, εἰκός ἐστι τοὺς μὲν ἐρῶντας, οὕτως ἂν οἰομένους καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἄλλων ζηλοῦσθαι ὥσπερ αὐτοὺς ὑφ᾽ αὑτῶν, ἐπαρθῆναι τῷ λέγειν καὶ φιλοτιμουμένους ἐπιδείκνυσθαι πρὸς ἅπαντας ὅτι οὐκ ἄλλως αὐτοῖς πεπόνηται: τοὺς δὲ μὴ ἐρῶντας, κρείττους αὑτῶν ὄντας, τὸ βέλτιστον ἀντὶ τῆς δόξης τῆς παρὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων αἱρεῖσθαι."

friends and any benefits they may bring and this will be cause of conflict between them (232b5-d4)[122]. Yet again, the lovers are contrasted with the non-lovers, whose attitude towards this point will be the complete opposite. Far from being hindered in his relations with other people, the boy will actually improve them under the auspices of the non-lover (232d4-e3)[123].

At 232e3ff., the non-lover once again refers to the transient nature of ἔρως[124]. That this fact constitutes a problem for every pederastic relationship is something not very difficult to understand. By definition, pederastic relationships have a "better used by" date. What attracts the ἐραστής, what causes the erotic attachment is the youthful beauty the ἐρώμενος is the bearer of. For the ἐρώμενος, being in such a relationship in that role is something he will outgrow, as he becomes a man. For this reason, pederastic relationships are, from the very start, of a fleeting and temporary nature, regardless of any other factors that might introduce instability into the relationship. The boy will necessarily grow up and this will lead to an inevitable break-up. The boy will cease to be desirable and their relationship will no longer be erotic. This, however, would not prevent the maintenance of a different kind of relationship. Indeed, one of the advantages of a pederastic relationship is that it apparently could strengthen the bonds between a man and a boy that would result in a close friendship (φιλία), a political and civic alliance, once the boy comes of age. The non-lover's perspective, however, is quite different. If the lover's desire for the boy is merely sexual, if all his passion is caused and supported by

[122] "καὶ μὲν δὴ εἴ σοι δέος παρέστηκεν ἡγουμένῳ χαλεπὸν εἶναι φιλίαν συμμένειν, καὶ ἄλλῳ μὲν τρόπῳ διαφορᾶς γενομένης κοινὴν ἂν ἀμφοτέροις καταστῆναι τὴν συμφοράν, προεμένου δέ σου ἃ περὶ πλείστου ποιῇ μεγάλην ἄν σοι βλάβην ἂν γενέσθαι, εἰκότως ἂν τοὺς ἐρῶντας μᾶλλον ἂν φοβοῖο: πολλὰ γὰρ αὐτούς ἐστι τὰ λυποῦντα, καὶ πάντ᾽ ἐπὶ τῇ αὐτῶν βλάβῃ νομίζουσι γίγνεσθαι. διόπερ καὶ τὰς πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους τῶν ἐρωμένων συνουσίας ἀποτρέπουσιν, φοβούμενοι τοὺς μὲν οὐσίαν κεκτημένους μὴ χρήμασιν αὐτοὺς ὑπερβάλωνται, τοὺς δὲ πεπαιδευμένους μὴ συνέσει κρείττους γένωνται: τῶν δὲ ἄλλο τι κεκτημένων ἀγαθὸν τὴν δύναμιν ἑκάστου φυλάττονται. πείσαντες μὲν οὖν ἀπεχθέσθαι σε τούτοις εἰς ἐρημίαν φίλων καθιστᾶσιν, ἐὰν δὲ τὸ σεαυτοῦ σκοπῶν ἄμεινον ἐκείνων φρονῇς, ἥξεις αὐτοῖς εἰς διαφοράν"

[123] "ὅσοι δὲ μὴ ἐρῶντες ἔτυχον, ἀλλὰ δι᾽ ἀρετὴν ἔπραξαν ὧν ἐδέοντο, οὐκ ἂν τοῖς συνοῦσι φθονοῖεν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς μὴ ἐθέλοντας μισοῖεν, ἡγούμενοι ὑπ᾽ ἐκείνων μὲν ὑπερορᾶσθαι, ὑπὸ τῶν συνόντων δὲ ὠφελεῖσθαι, ὥστε πολὺ πλείων ἐλπὶς φιλίαν αὐτοῖς ἐκ τοῦ πράγματος ἢ ἔχθραν γενέσθαι."

"καὶ μὲν δὴ τῶν μὲν ἐρώντων πολλοὶ πρότερον τοῦ σώματος ἐπεθύμησαν ἢ τὸν τρόπον ἔγνωσαν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων οἰκείων ἔμπειροι ἐγένοντο, ὥστε ἄδηλον αὐτοῖς εἰ ἔτι τότε βουλήσονται φίλοι εἶναι, ἐπειδὰν τῆς ἐπιθυμίας παύσωνται· τοῖς δὲ μὴ ἐρῶσιν, οἳ καὶ πρότερον ἀλλήλοις φίλοι ὄντες ταῦτα ἔπραξαν, οὐκ ἐξ ὧν ἂν εὖ πάθωσι ταῦτα εἰκὸς ἐλάττω τὴν φιλίαν αὐτοῖς ποιῆσαι, ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μνημεῖα καταλειφθῆναι τῶν μελλόντων ἔσεσθαι."

[124] "καὶ μὲν δὴ τῶν μὲν ἐρώντων πολλοὶ πρότερον τοῦ σώματος ἐπεθύμησαν ἢ τὸν τρόπον ἔγνωσαν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων οἰκείων ἔμπειροι ἐγένοντο, ὥστε ἄδηλον αὐτοῖς εἰ ἔτι τότε βουλήσονται φίλοι εἶναι, ἐπειδὰν τῆς ἐπιθυμίας παύσωνται· τοῖς δὲ μὴ ἐρῶσιν, οἳ καὶ πρότερον ἀλλήλοις φίλοι ὄντες ταῦτα ἔπραξαν, οὐκ ἐξ ὧν ἂν εὖ πάθωσι ταῦτα εἰκὸς ἐλάττω τὴν φιλίαν αὐτοῖς ποιῆσαι, ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μνημεῖα καταλειφθῆναι τῶν μελλόντων ἔσεσθαι."

nothing more than the boy's bodily charms, once the erotic attraction is gone, there will be nothing left to maintain with the boy any kind of relationship whatsoever. This problem does not affect the non-lover. There is a previous connection between him and the boy, they are already φίλοι, and this fact will not be affected by their sexual relationship. Adding a sexual component to their previous relationship will, as the non-lover argues, actually improve their relationship, because will act as a "reminder of things to come" (233a1-4).

The non-lover now addresses how yielding to a lover will hinder the boy's chances of improving himself (233a5ff.). The lover, the speaker states, will praise his beloved regardless of his merit. There are two reasons for this behaviour: he does not want to displease the beloved – since the continuous enjoyment of his favours depends on his will – and because the lover's desire prevents him from knowing any better. This is a very important point. Ἔρως is a force than begets ignorance, obscurity, confusion. The lover is a man affected by a foreign power that prevents him from seeing things as they really are. His perspective on reality and, to the greatest extent, on his beloved is distorted by the influence of love. To everyone else, his beloved is nothing but a pretty boy with probably some praiseworthy characteristics and, not less probably, with much that needs correction and improvement. For the lover, deluded as he is by the power that took possession of his soul, the beloved is nothing less than perfection incarnate. Furthermore, ἔρως has the uncanny ability to take everything to an extreme; every pain and pleasure related to love (e.g., the pain of being unsuccessful, the pleasure of being successful) are distorted in such a degree that they reach their utmost point (233a4-e6). One assumes that the non-lover has no such problems and that he will praise and admonish the boy whenever it is due. What follows is a synthesis of the previous points using a parallel construction. The lover's blameworthy feature is immediately contrasted with the non-lover's parallel praiseworthy feature. Whereas the lover considers only the immediate pleasure, the non-lover considers future advantage; whereas the lover is subdued by ἔρως, the non-lover rules himself, where the lover is easily angered even by trivial matters, the non-lover also has that under control, forgiving all involuntary wrongs and striving to

avoid all voluntary ones. These, he states, are the signs of an affectionate relationship due to last a long time (233c5-d4)[125].

The speaker now anticipates possible objections. The first one (233d4ff.) pertains to the belief that a φιλία such as the one previously described would only be possible if preceded by an erotic relationship. Ἔρως begets φιλία, whereas an unerotic sexual relationship would have no such power. To demolish this objection, the speaker invokes other relationships ordinarily named φιλία, such as the love between parents and children and the affection between friends. These, of course, are not caused by ἔρως, so it does not follow that one needs ἔρως in order to have φιλία. Next, the speaker addresses the objection that states that one must χαρίζεσθαι those who are in most need; the lovers are the ones in most need of χαρίζεσθαι; therefore, the boy must χαρίζεσθαι the lover. I chose to employ the word in Greek because this argument plays with the richness of meaning characteristic of this verb. It has been used all through the speech as a euphemism for the boy's concession of sexual gratification[126]. In this passage, however, χαρίζεσθαι is also used in a much wider sense: it refers to the granting of any favours whatsoever, to the act of giving something as an act of generosity or kindness. The speaker's answer to this objection feeds in the same ambiguity; hence the reference to people without economic means, to beggars and paupers. These will be most grateful, if they are invited to dinner, but, nonetheless, people usually invite their friends, not them. Rather, in accordance to the principal of intelligent self-interest, one should give favours not those who are most needy, but to those that can pay back the favour and are most worthy of it.

What follows (233e4-234b1) is another parallel construction that highlights the lover's flaws and the non-lover's qualities. The lover will only enjoy the boy's youthful charms; the non-lover will abide by him even in old age and share his goods. The lover will brag about his erotic success; the non-lover will maintain a decent silence. The lover's zeal will only last for a short while; the non-lover will be the boy's φίλος all his life. The lover, once the desire has subsided, will seek an excuse to quarrel; the non-lover

[125] "εἰ δ' ἄρα σοι τοῦτο παρέστηκεν, ὡς οὐχ οἷόν τε ἰσχυρὰν φιλίαν γενέσθαι ἐὰν μή τις ἐρῶν τυγχάνῃ, ἐνθυμεῖσθαι χρὴ ὅτι οὔτ' ἂν τοὺς ὑεῖς περὶ πολλοῦ ἐποιούμεθα οὔτ' ἂν τοὺς πατέρας καὶ τὰς μητέρας, οὔτ' ἂν πιστοὺς φίλους ἐκεκτήμεθα, οἳ οὐκ ἐξ ἐπιθυμίας τοιαύτης γεγόνασιν ἀλλ' ἐξ ἑτέρων ἐπιτηδευμάτων."
[126] Lysias' speech uses a variety of euphemisms: "πρᾶγμα" (231c7), "συνεῖναι" (232b1), "ἃ περὶ πλείστου ποιῇ" (232c1), "ταῦτα ἔπραξαν" (233a2), "ταῦτα" (233a4), χαρίζεσθαι (233d4, 233e4). However, the use of specific euphemistic terms should not overshadow the fact that the whole speech is euphemistic: the philia proposed by the non-lover includes a fundamental sexual component, even though it is only mentioned euphemistically or discreetly alluded to.

will show his worth. To this the non-lover adds (234b1-5) that the lover is always the object of reproach, due to his harmful way of life, whereas no such reproach has ever been directed to a non-lover. The speech finishes (234b6ff) with the speaker assuring the boy that he does not recommend yielding to every non-lover (like a lover would not recommend yielding to every lover), therefore excusing himself from an accusation of inciting promiscuity. The reasons he puts forth, however, are purely practical: the concession of sexual favours to many makes it less valuable to the ones they are granted to, and it would be impossible to keep each and every one of them under the false impression that they are the one and only.

1.3. Sorting out the "mess": perspectives on ἔρως in Lysias' speech

From this rather tedious overview of the speech, it becomes clear that the charge of untidiness is not without some justification. However, even if it is somewhat inarticulate, the speech is the bearer and expression of a specific perspective on the phenomena at stake: ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν. This perspective is expressed through the joint portrait of three different characters. Two of these characters are portrayed explicitly: the lover and the non-lover. The third is portrayed in relation and in contrast with the other two, the boy the speech is addressed to. As we have seen before, the fictional author of the speech, the non-lover, builds his speech based on the expected common ground between him and the boy. This common ground has two aspects. On the one hand, both the non-lover and the boy look at ἔρως from outside, and are not affected by it. They can examine and judge it from a safe distance. On the other hand, their perspective is characterised by self-interest, by a wise and prudent management of one's affairs, as the main guiding principle.

The speech's structure is chaotic. It is a messy and disorganised hodgepodge. The different elements of the argument seem to be simply piled on, added, juxtaposed. Each point is added to the next without any effort to logically articulate them. The repeated use of phrases like ἔτι δὲ (231a7; 231c1; 232a6; 233d4) and καὶ μὲν δὴ (231d6; 232b5; 232e2; 233a5) emphasize this aspect of the speech. It does not even seem that the author of the speech made any effort to conceal or smooth out these awkward transitions. There seems to be very little coordination between these elements, besides the fact that they all spring from the same perspective and view on life and on the detrimental effect of ἔρως on it. It

is in this respect that we can find an element of unity and structure in the speech. The different arguments presented in favour of the non-lover and against the ἐραστής, when analysed, reveal fundamental structures of the gap between ἔρως and the perspective that is not affected by ἔρως. Lysias' speech provides us with a multiplicity of elements that can be described as pieces of a puzzle. This puzzle is not in any way completed in the speech. What we are given is a disjointed and messy pile of pieces. But these can be organized in such a way as to show us a clearer picture of the contrast between ἔρως and its absence.

What we are going to do now is to establish the criteria used by Lysias to draw the contrast between the two main figures in the speech, the lover and the non-lover, or, to put it more precisely, the contrast between a life ruled by ἔρως, and a life free from its power, as understood from the specific viewpoint of the non-lover. Before doing that, we must bear in mind that this is not the perspective of a mere observer, and much less an uninterested observer. The views regarding the lover, the non-lover and the boy expressed in Lysias' speech are the non-lover's. They are the views of someone involved in a competition for the boy's favours. So it is perfectly natural that the fictional speaker portrays himself favourably and his rival unfavourably. This, however, does not mean that these arguments only make sense in this very narrow and peculiar situation. As it is addressed to a boy who, as we have seen before, is not himself affected by ἔρως, this speech is based on the assumption of a community of perspectives between the non-lover and the boy. They are looking at the ἐραστής as people who are not affected by ἔρως. As we shall see, the arguments used by the non-lover reflect a perspective that understands ἔρως as deviation from the normal day-to-day life, as something at odds with the mode of life that is approved, endorsed and recommended by most people deemed reasonable and sensible. One should bear in mind, however, the Lysias' speech is not a theoretical analysis of the ἐραστής' behaviour. The intention of the fictional speaker is to highlight the features of the ἐραστής that are to be entirely rejected by the boy. But, while doing that, it provides us with a catalogue of the various behavioural peculiarities of the ἐραστής – even if not necessarily every one of them.

In the next few pages were are going to make a census of the behaviours of both the ἐραστής and the non-lover, as they are contrasted with each other. The performance of this task will have two results: on the one hand, it will provide us with a picture of the kind of perspective and behaviour Lysias' non-lover endorses, a perspective that is

assumed throughout the speech to be the one generally adopted by most people within the πόλις; on the other hand, we will get a picture of the behavioural manifestations of ἔρως, and of how the behaviour of the ἐραστής deviates from what would be considered normal and acceptable behaviour. The contrast between the ἐραστής and the non-lover, however, is not always explicit. It is a formal feature of the speech. At several points in the speech, the contrast is implicit, and can be implicitly understood. The speech is built in such a way that at several moments the implicit point is expected to be understood without problem: if the ἐραστής does or is so-and-so, the non-lover will be or do the opposite. This shows that the fictional speaker assumes that the speech's addressee, the boy, is familiar not only with the kind of being the ἐραστής is, that the ἐραστής is not something rare, unknown or exotic, but also with the contrast between the ἐραστής and the non-lover.

What we are going to do next is to list the behavioural traits and analyse their significance. By doing this, we will be making clearer something that is already present in the speech, albeit in a much more obscure and fuzzy way. The order in which we are going to present the different elements does not have any particular importance. What will matter at the end of the analysis is the connection between its different components.

1.Unilaterality

The first set of behavioural markers we are going to look at have to do with the unilateral or partial perspective that is characteristic of the ἐραστής, in contrast with the seemingly totalising perspective of those who are not affected by ἔρως. By unilaterality we mean the recurring understanding of the ἐραστής' perspective as a perspective that only has access to a small region of reality, a perspective that does include important and fundamental aspects of reality. For this reason, this perspective is not only incomplete, but is also *unreal*. The ἐραστής is presented in the speech as the bearer of a limited, tunnel-like or bubble-like perspective.

This perspective is built around a specific centre: the relationship with the ἐρώμενος. It is around this centre that the totality of the ἐραστής's perspective is built. Everything else is put aside for the sake of it. The life of the ἐραστής will therefore be reduced to his relationship with the ἐρώμενος. In order words, the ἐραστής will be the bearer of a mistaken perspective regarding what constitutes life as a whole. He will take

what is a single aspect of life, a piece, of fragment, for the totality. This means that the ἐραστής' perspective not only does not show reality as it really is, but also that it will be in conflict with reality. The bubble that constitutes this perspective will eventually burst when confronted with reality. The unilateral nature of the ἐραστής' perspective, sc. its nature as a fragment mistaken for the whole, manifests itself in a variety of ways. We will now examine these one by one.

1.1. Absolutisation of ἔρως

The presence of ἔρως in the ἐραστής' perspective is absolute. There seems to be no space for any other kind of existential orientation. The ἐρώμενος, or to be more precise, the relationship with the ἐρώμενος, becomes the focal point of the ἐραστής' understanding of reality. The ἐρώμενος becomes the centre of the ἐραστής' life, the only thing he cares about, the sole focus of his aims and endeavours. He is the ἐραστής' only and overwhelming source of interest and attachment. This limited perspective, however, does not present itself as such. To the one who is inside the bubble, the ἐραστής, the bubble constitutes a form of access to the totality of reality. But it is a form of access to the totality from a very limited angle, an angle defined by his obsessive attachment to the ἐρώμενος. All other possible aims will fade into the background, and be seen in relation to the ἐρώμενος, either as obstacles or instruments in achieving the χαρίζεσθαι, or as irrelevant. The world of those who are not in love is different. Their perspective is not constituted from the narrow angle of an obsessive attachment to a specific person. Their lives are characterised by a plurality of aims and objectives, by a multiplicity of sources of interest and poles of attraction. The non-lover does not put all his eggs in one basket, so to speak. His life has a multiplicity of centres. He seems to be concerned about a variety of different aims, all of them accepted and endorsed by the community: family, friends, his reputation, the management of his own affairs, etc. This is what becomes someone leading a balanced life, not someone obsessed with a single overwhelming, life-consuming purpose, like the ἐραστής.

1.2. Temporality

The ἐραστής' perspective is also limited in its temporal horizon. This is made evident throughout the speech especially by contrast with the special relationship proposed by the non-lover, which is at several stages presented as an enduring and long term relationship. In 232b5, the stability and endurance of the φιλία between the boy and the non-lover, or between the boy and the ἐραστής is shown to be of the utmost concern. He makes promises as if his obsessive attachment to the ἐρώμενος were to last forever, long beyond he will be capable and willing to fulfil them. This is one of the problems of granting one's favours to an ἐραστής: when he is no longer under the power of ἔρως, he will change his mind ("μεταγνῶναι") and regret ("μεταμέλει") all that he did for the ἐρώμενος' sake (231a2ff.). In 234a4-5, the ὀλίγος χρόνος of the relationship with the ἐραστής is explicitly and negatively contrasted with the lifelong duration of the special relationship with the non-lover (διὰ παντὸς τοῦ βίου).

This can be interpreted in two different ways. On the one hand, the ἐραστής' relation to temporality could be characterised by an exclusive focus on the present. The lover will be concentrated on enjoying the moment, putting aside any concerns for the future. He might be aware of the fact that his obsession with the ἐρώμενος will not last, but he prefers to focus solely on the enjoyment of the present. But there is another way of understanding what is at stake in the ὀλίγος χρόνος. The ἐραστής lives within a temporal bubble. Being affected by ἔρως is understood as something that comes and goes quickly and suddenly. It is a constitutively ephemeral state. The ἐραστής himself is or at least acts as if he were oblivious to this fact. He seems to be unaware of the temporal limits of his own situation. Being under the power of ἔρως might be lived as an event that contains the totality of one's life, but, in reality, it is simply a temporally circumscribed event, that can end as suddenly as it begins. In this case, then, the ἐραστής is not even aware of the temporal limits, but lives as if the present was absolute. In both interpretations, the temporality of ἔρως is false. It does not consider things as they really are. Either because he wilfully neglects to consider the future or he is unable to do so due to the influence of ἔρως, the ἐραστής' perspective on the temporal aspect of his condition will only attend to a fragment of the whole of his life. In contrast, the non-lover will have his sights on the totality of life; his perspective is not limited, not contained within the bubble created by ἔρως.

1.3. Identification of the object of ἔρως

This next aspect is complex. One of its aspects is closely related to the one we have just considered: the body, or, to be more precise, the temporality of the body. The effects of ἔρως cease suddenly in part because the main object of attachment is itself ephemeral. What attracts the ἐραστής to the ἐρώμενος is his beauty, his youthful splendour (ὥρα). The young man can only possess this for a short while; it will inevitably fade away. Any relationship based on the possession of this attribute alone is doomed to end before long – and it is stated repeatedly throughout the speech that the ἐραστής desires the ἐρώμενος only because of his ὥρα, his youthful physical beauty (234a2-3, 234a6-7).

This represents a peculiar form of tunnel vision regarding the ἐρώμενος, an additional degree of limitation to what we identified as the already substantially limited perspective of the ἐραστής. The centre of the ἐραστής' life will not be the ἐρώμενος as such, his "personality", his "way of being" (τρόπος) but rather simply his body (σῶμα) (232e2ff.). In the eyes of the ἐραστής, the ἐρώμενος possess an abstract identity fundamentally determined by his body. This, of course, does not mean that the ἐραστής does not see anything but a body when he looks at the ἐρώμενος, but rather that the ἐρώμενος' body becomes the key to his identity, to which all other features are subordinated. Because the ἐρώμενος' body is perceived as beautiful, his τρόπος will be understood as having the same positive predicates. Because it concentrates on an aspect that, in the terms of the speech, is of secondary importance, the ἐραστής' perspective on the ἐρώμενος will be fundamentally out of focus, and unable to perceive the ἐρώμενος as he really is.

1.4. The aim of ἔρως

The ἔρως that affects the ἐραστής is basically a form of ἐπιθυμία for the ἐρώμενος' body. The ἐραστής' perspective on the ἐρώμενος, and, since the ἐρώμενος represents the focus of his tunnel-like perspective, on reality as a whole, will therefore be determined and defined by what is identified as a specific form of ἐπιθυμία. Being determined by his ἐπιθυμία for the ἐρώμενος' bodily beauty, the ἐραστής will be interested mainly in achieving the χαρίζεσθαι as a source of ἡδονή. That is the ἐραστής' aim. This constitutes yet another degree of limitation to the ἐραστής' perspective: the ἐραστής' main purpose, the aim that functions as the focus of his existential orientation and of his perspective on

reality will be the ἡδονή that can be derived from gratifying his desire for the ἐρώμενος. The non-lover also wants the χαρίζεσθαι, but that is not his exclusive aim. The perspective of those who are not under the influence of ἔρως will be guided, not by the immediate and exclusive pursuit of ἡδονή, but will have in mind future benefit or advantage (ὠφέλεια) (233b5-6). The aims of the non-lover are multiple.

The ἐραστής is stuck in a present dominated by his desire for the ἐρώμενος, a present that seems to have no end. This constitutes three forms of limitation that feed and compound each other: one regarding the temporal horizon of ἔρως, the other regarding the identification of the object of ἔρως, the other regarding the aims and purposes of the ἐραστής' existence[127]. The perspective of those who are not under the influence of ἔρως, on the contrary, will be able to look beyond the immediate situation and plan for the future, looking for what is advantageous, not simply what is pleasurable. This more inclusive perspective will most likely also pursue pleasure. But it will do that to a degree that is compatible with other aims and purposes, so that it does not become a burden to one's life.

2.Instability of perspective.

The instability of the ἐραστής' perspective, however, is not merely temporal. We have seen above that the perspective of the ἐραστής constitutes a limited form of access to the totality of reality, from a very narrow angle defined by the relationship with the ἐρώμενος. We have also seen that this kind of relationship is intrinsically ephemeral. This means that the ἐραστής' perspective will change dramatically each time he comes under the influence of ἔρως, and each time that influence subsides. His whole world changes radically, since the world of those who are not in love is incongruent with the world of that which is. The narrow angle from which his perspective was constituted opens up to include a variety of other aims, purposes and poles of attraction. The bubble bursts and the former ἐραστής is now able to look back at his previous situation from a perspective free from the constraints imposed by ἔρως. From this new vantage point, the former ἐραστής will reassess his relationship with his former ἐρώμενος and will conclude that it was not worth the effort. This μετάγνωσις will lead to a μεταμέλεια and the breaking of

[127] These seem to roughly correspond to the triple criterion mentioned in Pausanias' speech in the *Symposium* (181b1ff.): identity of the object, temporality, aim.

all the promises made and yet unfulfilled ((231a3ff.; see also 231a6ff.). This is the result of a return to normality, and of the restoration of ὠφέλεια as a decision-making criterion.

But this is not the only change in perspective the speech refers to. The ἐραστής' perspective is also unstable because the obsessive attachment to one specific ἐρώμενος can and likely will be replaced by an equally obsessive attachment to a different ἐρώμενος. This much is stated at 231c1ff., that describes the radical change in ἐραστής' behaviour towards his former ἐρώμενος, so as to please his current ἐρώμενος. In this passage, the fickleness of the ἐραστής is shown to cancel out his obsessive dedication to the ἐρώμενος as a positive trait. In a way, it shows that the identity of the ἐρώμενος is of secondary importance, that being the object of an ἐραστής' obsessive attachment is somewhat unrelated to the boy himself. The ἐραστής' will easily fall in and out of love with a succession of ἐρώμενοι. Each episode of being affected by eros will create its own bubble. Formally and structurally, the bubbles will be the same; but the centre will vary according to which boy is the object of obsessive attachment. Since each instance of erotic attachment creates its own bubble-like or tunnel-like perspective, and since this is a perspective that gives access and interprets the whole of reality according to the narrow ἐρώμενος-centred angle that constitutes it, each change of ἐρώμενος will produce a radically different perspective on reality. The ἐραστής will jump from bubble to bubble, adopting at each time different, incompatible and mutually exclusive perspectives on reality, that, in addition to this, fail to render reality as it really is. The life of the ἐραστής will consist in jumping from dream to dream, or from dream to reality, and then to another dream again. His connection to reality will be unstable.

3.Compulsion.

Throughout the speech, the ἐραστής is characterised as someone acting under compulsion. He is not in charge of his own life, but rather led by what seems to be an exterior force. This idea is introduced at the beginning of the speech, in contrast with the freedom from constraint that characterises the non-lover, and, by extension, those who are not affected by ἔρως: "οὐ γὰρ ὑπ' ἀνάγκης ἀλλ' ἑκόντες" (231a4). The idea that the ἐραστής is under compulsion is then repeated at 233b4. The understanding of the situation of the ἐραστής as being subdued by ἔρως is expressed in the self-description of the non-lover as "οὐχ ὑπ' ἔρωτος ἡττώμενος ἀλλ' ἐμαυτοῦ κρατῶν" (233c1). The idea of being

master of oneself, of being in control of oneself, ἐαυτοῦ κρατεῖν, is explicitly contrasted with a situation where one is under the power of a different force.

This opposition between having control over oneself or being subdued by something else, an exterior force, is a τόπος of ancient Greek culture. It expresses the opposition between sovereignty, having power over oneself, over one's actions and behaviour, and slavery, being subject to someone or something else. As we have seen in the previous chapter, lack of sovereignty, of control over oneself, is incompatible with civic dignity. A citizen should not be at the mercy of an external force, but, on contrary, be able to subdue and control his urges and desires, and determine his behaviour free from those powers. Being an ἐραστής, however, is being enslaved by ἔρως, is being under the power of the ἐπιθυμία that obsessively draws the ἐραστής towards his ἐρώμενος. It is therefore incompatible with civic dignity. The external force that subdues and controls the ἐραστής forces him do behave oddly. It is not simply an external force that overthrows the legitimate ruler; it is an external force that, once it takes power, leads his subject into a course of wild and absurd actions. It is an arbitrary power. In this sense, the portrayal of ἔρως in Lysias' speech conforms to the traditional τόπος of ἔρως τύραννος: a foreign invasive power that takes over one's life and makes one behave oddly, wrecking it in the process.

Not being an ἐραστής is being free, or more than free – sovereign. The non-lover's sovereignty manifests itself in his capacity to freely deliberate and choose what is best for himself, to manage his own affairs in the best possible way (231a5-6). Not only is the compulsion of ἔρως incompatible with the ability to choose what is best, being in control of oneself is associated with that same ability (232a3ff.). The non-lover's freedom from the compulsion of ἔρως is therefore associated with his freedom from the limited perspective of the ἐραστής regarding his existential orientation. Because he is not forced by ἔρως to focus obsessively on the boy, the non-lover, like everyone who is not under such compulsion, is able to manage his life without disregarding his own best long-term interest.

A specific passage of Lysias' speech suggests that the interplay between compulsion and the generation of the ἐραστής' perspective may be more complex than has been so far hinted at in this analysis. At 231d2-3, Lysias states: "καὶ γάρ αὐτοὶ ὁμολογοῦσι νοσεῖν μᾶλλον ἢ σωφρονεῖν, καὶ εἰδέναι ὅτι κακῶς φρονοῦσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ

δύνασθαι αὐτῶν κρατεῖν". It is unclear, however, if this applies to every ἐραστής. It seems more likely, considering other aspects of the characterisation of the ἐραστής in the speech, that this applies to only some, not all, the ἐρασταί. The situation of these ἐρασταί is not described as one of complete oblivion regarding their own situation. They are aware of the distortion of their perspective. They are aware that their perspective does not conform to the standards of a normal and healthy perspective. This seems to constitute a *quantum minimum* of lucidity. At first, this seems to constitute a restriction in the compulsive nature of ἔρως. It indicates that there is at least a remnant of self-determination left: the ἐραστής is at the very least able to recognise his own situation. This seems to set up the stage for a conflict within the ἐραστής' perspective: on one side, the compulsive power of ἔρως, on the other side, the awareness

But, in reality, this is an element that is completely powerless to counteract or resist the power of ἔρως. Those who are under its power are unable to control or rule themselves. The ἐρασταί are slaves to ἔρως, but they are not blind to their own situation as slaves; they are rather unable to break their shackles and free themselves from their bondage. They are aware of their situation, that they are living under the yoke of a tyrant, but can do nothing against it. What Lysias is describing is a situation akin to the one described by Ovid, "video meliora proboque, / deteriora sequor" (*Metamorphoses* VII, 20-21), which we have already mentioned in the previous chapter[128]. The ἐραστής himself would agree that the perspective the non-lover is a bearer of, the perspective of those who are not under the power of ἔρως, is the healthy, effective and profitable one. The ἐραστής himself would recognise that being obsessively attached to the ἐρώμενος, that living a life oriented towards achieving the χαρίζεσθαι to the detriment of everything else, in short, that being an ἐραστής, is a situation undesirable and to be avoided at all costs. He recognises that he is not behaving as he should, that he does not understand reality as it should be understood. Yet, he cannot avoid doing what he does, thinking what he thinks, desiring what he desires. He is compelled to want the ἐρώμενος obsessively. The shock with reality that is the usual outcome of the disturbed perspective of the ἐραστής takes place, in this case, within the bubble-like perspective itself. The shock does not occur when the bubble bursts and the ἐραστής is no longer affected by ἔρως. It occurs as the

[128] See also EURIPIDES, *Medea* 1078-1080: "καὶ μανθάνω μὲν οἷα δρᾶν μέλλω κακά,/ θυμὸς δὲ κρείσσων τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων,/ ὅσπερ μεγίστων αἴτιος κακῶν βροτοῖς.". Cf. chapter II, p. 111ff.

ἐραστής is under the power of ἔρως. The fact that this happens in spite of the ἐραστής' better judgement, emphasises the power of the compulsion he is under.

4.Distortion

The ἐραστής is shown throughout the speech to be the bearer of a distorted perspective. This has already been alluded to when we mentioned the fact that the ἐραστής is retained within a bubble-like perspective that accesses reality from the narrow angle of his obsessive relationship with the ἐρώμενος. This is the most basic and fundamental distortion: to view the ἐρώμενος as the centre of the universe, the focal point of reality, the angle from which the rest of reality should be viewed and that for the sake of which everything else is pursued or rejected. But this is not the only element of distortion present in the speech. The other elements of distortion, which we will examine next, are distinguished from the ones we designated as aspects of unilaterality, in that they correspond not to an instance of taking a part as a whole, but rather to the creation of virtual content. In other words, what we are going to look at next is the delusional character of ἔρως, as featured in Lysias' speech.

4.1. Canonicity

The adoption of the unilateral perspective is an implicit rejection of the socially shared perspective, to which the ἐρώμενος is clearly not the centre of the universe. But the perspective of the ἐραστής is not just radically different – it also claims for itself that it is valid, that it renders reality as it really is, in short, that it is φρόνιμος. It is a pseudo-φρόνιμος perspective based on a specific form of ἐπιθυμία, concentrated obsessively on a specific object, which is taken as the best thing in the universe. The ἐραστής assumes that the way he sees the ἐρώμενος is shared by others. The ἐραστής believes that, and acts as if, his own distorted perspective was canonical. That is the basis of his excessive jealousy, and also of his urge to show the world he has successfully won over the ἐρώμενος (231e2ff.). He assumes that others will find the ἐρώμενος as desirable as he does; he assumes that others will envy his triumph. He does not seem to understand that, for those who are not in love with that specific person, his ἐρώμενος holds no special value.

4.2. Other aspects of distortion.

The ἐραστής' perspective is globally and entirely distorted and this manifests itself in the way he deals with the ἐρώμενος. His ἐπιθυμία affects the way he sees the boy that ἔρως has turned into his ἐρώμενος, by exaggerating his positive predicates, and erasing the negative ones (233a6ff.). The presence of ἔρως alters the perspective of the ἐραστής in such a way that the positive predicates of the ἐρώμενος become superlatively salient. The obsessive focus on those positive predicates will make the possible negative predicates fade away, or even be converted into positive ones. This seems to be a normal symptom displayed by those who are in love: even the neutral or negative attributes become instantiations of the ἐρώμενος' perfection. To the ἐρώμενος the ἐραστής will attribute a whole host of qualities, regardless of this being true or not. Many of them will be simply made up by a perspective that looks at the ἐρώμενος in a superlatively positive light. In any case, what the ἐραστής sees is not the ἐρώμενος as he really is, i.e., as most people see him, but rather a fictional version of the ἐρώμενος, created by ἔρως.

This corresponds to a delusion created by the ἐρώμενος' ἐπιθυμία for the ἐραστής. The ἐραστής desires the ἐρώμενος. As we have seen before, he specifically desires the ἐρώμενος' bodily beauty, with the aim of achieving the χαρίζεσθαι. The most salient feature will be the ἐρώμενος' bodily beauty. All his other attributes, what Lysias calls his τρόπος will fade into the background, or will be subsumed under the prevalence of bodily beauty. The ἐραστής' attraction to the ἐρώμενος' body will lead to the product of virtual contents regarding not only the body, but also his "way of being". The less than beautiful features of the ἐρώμενος' body will be seen as superlatively beautiful. As for the aspects related to the ἐρώμενος' τρόπος, these will appear to the erastes as possessing a loveliness comensurable, even if secondary, to his bodily beauty.

4.3. Exaggeration and overreaction

But it is not only the perspective on the ἐρώμενος himself that will be distorted. The ἐραστής' perspective is characterised by excess through and through, not only regarding pain and pleasure, but also regarding anger, jealousy and suspicion. Circumstances and events that would not normally be particularly pleasurable or painfully

will be experienced by the ἐραστής in a superlative way, if they are in any way connected with his relationship with the ἐρώμενος (233b1ff.). The disturbed ἐραστής will react excessively to perceived slights, feeling anger with little cause (232c1ff.). Unlike the non-lover, the ἐραστής seems to be incapable of distinguishing between what is done on purpose or not (233c2-3). The ἐραστής' perspective distorts the ἐρώμενος' actions by perceiving them in an undifferentiated way. The ἐραστής is incapable of interpreting the meaning of other people's behaviours, and can even go to the extremity of reacting strongly to slights that exist nowhere but in his mind. These are always interpreted according to his overwhelming obsession, creating a delusional landscape filled with imaginary offenses, threats and betrayals. The way he reacts to other people's behaviour is therefore completely out of tune with the real meaning of the situation he is in, as if he was living in a different world. From his exaggerated and uncalled for reactions, the ἐραστής shows that he is at the mercy of strong and uncontrollable desires. His behaviour contrasts sharply with how people who are not under the influence of ἔρως react in similar situations. Those who are free from the power of ἔρως are capable of understanding the situation they are in and behaving accordingly. They interpret other people's behaviour appropriately and react in harmony with their accurate assessment.

5.Isolation

The situation of the ἐραστής is characterised by its isolation. One of the main aspects of this isolation has already been alluded to in our analysis. The ἐραστής' is isolated from the rest of mankind because he inhabits a bubble-like perspective centred on his ἐρώμενος. He is the bearer of a perspective no one else shares: a perspective that accesses reality as a whole from the narrow angle that is focused on that specific ἐρώμενος. The isolation created by his peculiar perspective makes him a stranger in the eyes of those who still inhabit the socially shared perspective. His is a perspective that is impossible to communicate, impossible to share with anyone else. The ἐραστής' obsessive focus on the ἐρώμενος means that the only relationship that matters to him is the one he will try to establish with the ἐρώμενος. His isolated perspective, with his obsessive aim, will lead to social isolation. All the other relationships will be subordinate to the relationship with the ἐρώμενος, and seen either as instrumental or detrimental to the establishment and maintenance of his connection to the ἐρώμενος. This leads to a state of permanent hostility towards anyone the ἐραστής perceives as a threat to his relationship with the ἐρώμενος.

This is expressed in Lysias' speech indirectly, through the effects a hypothetical χαρίζεσθαι of the ἐραστής would have on the boy the speech is addressed to. The fear of losing the ἐρώμενος' favours to someone else will put the ἐραστής on guard against anyone he perceives as a potential threat, to anyone he recognises as possessing any predicate that might make him preferable in the eyes of the ἐρώμενος (232c4ff.). A boy that grants his favours to an ἐραστής will put himself at the mercy of someone who is dominated by jealousy, someone who will be motivated to socially isolate his ἐρώμενος. In contrast with the non-lover, the ἐραστής will regard anyone that associates himself with the ἐρώμενος as a potential threat, and will hate (μισεῖν), look at them with ill-will (φθόνος) (232d3ff.). The ἐραστής creates a social desert, ἐρημία φιλῶν, around the ἐρώμενος, a state of isolation that mirrors the ἐραστής' own (231d1ff.). This, instead of fostering friendly relations in the life of the ἐρώμενος, will on the contrary create enemies (232d6f.).

But the isolating effect of the ἐραστής on the life of the ἐρώμενος goes even deeper. What the boy is warned against in Lysias' speech is not simply the jealousy and distrust of the ἐραστής. To yield to the ἐραστής' advances actually means accepting his isolated perspective; it is to recognise that he is the bearer of a perspective that accesses reality as it really is. By accepting the ἐραστής into his life the ἐρώμενος is co-opting a perspective that is completely at odds with the socially shared perspective. The ἐρώμενος is therefore isolating himself, showing that he is also the bearer of a distorted and isolated perspective. The ἐρώμενος is supposed to be superlatively concerned with the socially shared perspective. This is reflected on how the ἐρώμενος worries about his reputation. In this he is no different from the ἐραστής. But the ἐραστής has a distorted view of what constitutes a good reputation. For the ἐραστής, it has to do with being successful in his pursuit of the ἐρώμενος. That is why he likes to brag about his success (232a1ff.). The ἐρώμενος, however, understands and is in tune with the values of his community (231e2). The ἐρώμενος might not be affected by ἔρως, and is therefore free from that particular form of distortion, but by choosing to grant favours to the ἐραστής will in itself be a display of lack of understanding of what constitutes his own self-interest. He will have failed, not unlike the ἐραστής, in identifying where his interest really lies, which is a fundamental component of any healthy and effective perspective. By choosing the ἐραστής, he is rejecting all the other people whose society will actually contribute to his

advantage. Those people are the ones that, due to their superior attributes, will actually be able to benefit the boy – chief amongst them the non-lover himself (232d2ff.).

6.Conflict

The ἐραστής is in a state of permanent conflict with others. As we have seen, his perspective is completely at odds with the way the community understands reality, putting him in an isolated position. This is perfect breeding ground for conflict. His obsessive desire for the ἐρώμενος, in single-minded pursuit of his objective, will put him in collision course with almost everyone around him. He will be in conflict with anyone he might perceive as his rival, and, as we have seen in these last few pages, his mistaken belief that others might desire the ἐρώμενος as much as he does will make him see rivals everywhere. His inability to understand other people's behaviours outside the framework of his own obsessive desire will lead him to see the possibility of betrayal in the most harmless of his ἐρώμενος' actions. His obsessive desire for him will make him demand attention and may lead him to limit the ἐρώμενος freedom. So he will create conflicts also with his ἐρώμενος. But this is not everything. Anyone that, even if not a rival for the boy's favours, might in some way be construed as an obstacle to achieving the ἐραστής' goals will be in conflict with him. Anyone that is part of the ἐρώμενος' life and might in some way present an obstacle to the ἐραστής' aims risks being the object of his hostility, even if not perceived as a rival for the ἐρώμενος' favours. The result is a permanent state of potential conflict with everyone and anyone, the ἐρώμενος included.

The point of view of the community is always present in this speech. It is a point of view that is unaffected by ἔρως, that looks at the situation of the ἐραστής from outside. It is the point of view of the non-lover, but it is also supposed to be the point of view of the boy the speech is addressed to, who is at risk of yielding to the ἐραστής. It is a point of view that judges the ἐραστής harshly, that disapproves of the ἐραστής. This is a point of view the serves not only as a foil to the disturbed perspective of the ἐραστής, but also as the standard from which the ἐραστής is deviating. It is not just the point of view of the non-lover, as the direct competitor of the ἐραστής in their attempt to achieve the χαρίζεσθαι. It is presented rather as the point of view that all those that, like the non-lover and the boy, are not affected by ἔρως. In other words, it is assumed throughout the speech

that the point of view of those who are not under the influence of ἔρως is the point of view of reality itself, the one that sees reality as it really is. In this context, a point of view that is not affected by ἔρως is a point of view that disapproves of ἔρως. To know ἔρως without being affected by it is to disapprove of it (231c7ff.). The disapproval of ἔρως has, as we have seen, cultural roots in ancient Greece. But not only was ancient Greek culture capable of producing apologetic views of ἔρως, but also one does not need to live within that specific culture to hold a negative view of the phenomenon of obsessive passionate love. On the contrary, the perspective that is manifested in Lysias' speech, albeit expressed within the framework of a peculiar cultural understanding, seems to be rooted in the almost universal perplexity caused by a phenomenon as strange as love. The kind of love described in the speech, the obsessive passionate kind, is so different from ordinary day-to-day perspective, so excessive, that rejecting it seems to be the only reasonable option. It is a perspective that seems to only make sense to those who are affected by ἔρως, which is to say: those who understand reality wrongly.

It is through this understanding of ἔρως as a perspective that fails to render reality as it really is that the notion of μανία is present in Lysias' speech. But μανία is not a notion Lysias makes explicit use of[129]. Rather, it is used as an implicit operator. As presented in Lysias' speech, the behaviour manifestations of ἔρως have all the characteristics of what could be assigned to a different cause. In other words, ἔρως is presented as a specific form of μανία, showing traits that, *mutatis mutandis*, are shared with different forms of μανία. But, by showing these characteristics of μανία, Lysias' speech is also showing the criteria used by the normal, sane perspective to recognise madness. By doing this, Lysias is calling to his aid the common and prevailing perspective, the corroborating testimony of most people.

The description of ἔρως in Lysias' speech includes a variety of elements that resemble the symptoms of a disease. But not all of them are to be found necessarily in every presentation. Different instances of ἔρως admit variations in presentation, varying on a case by case basis. Typically, ἔρως exhibits, if not all, at least some of these traits.

[129] There is, however, a passage where the connection is suggested, albeit discreetly. In 231d2-3, a passage we have already mentioned, Lysias contrasts σωφρονεῖν with νοσεῖν. In certain contexts the term νόσος and correlates can be used to denote not only disease in general, but the specific kind of disease that corresponds to μανία. That this is the case in this passage is made evident by the direct contrast with the notion of σωφροσύνη. In this passage, ἔρως is identified with a νόσος, a νόσος that is opposed to σωφροσύνη, i.e., μανία.

This means that different instances of ἔρως may exhibit different combinations of traits, but all instances will have some or even most of them. However, the characteristics attributed to ἔρως in the speech are closely associated with each other in the socially shared perspective's view of the erotic phenomenon – so closely associated that mentioning one of them will remind one of the others. They are bundled together as the signs and modes of behaviour of those that are affected by this peculiar form of disturbance. These different elements form metonymical connections: they are associated in a quasi-analytical form. By just seeing a few of them one is able to identify the whole phenomenon, even if a few of the signs described above are absent. Nonetheless, regardless of the exact configuration of each specific instance of ἔρως, they will share one basic and ever-present characteristic: they constitute a deviation from normality, and that is how most people tend to see them.

In this section we tried to build the puzzle as much as possible with the hodgepodge of pieces we have found in Lysias' speech. The result corresponds to a clearer, more organised and more distinctly drawn picture of the perspective that presides over and upon which the speech was built. It is this same perspective that will, in a much more organized and acute way, serve as a foundation for Socrates' first speech. However, the picture drawn by the elements we have collected from Lysias' speech do not correspond solely to the features of ἔρως. They correspond to the features of any kind of disturbed, mad behaviour. Lysias' speech may apply to a specific existential situation, a situation where ἔρως is determinant, but it identifies the behavioural features pertaining to μανία, or, to be more precise, to the normal understanding of μανία.

1.4. Μανία and ἔρως in Lysias' speech

One of the reasons for the untidiness of this speech lies in the fact that its main object, ἔρως, does not receive at any moment a definition or explanation. It is just assumed that the reader, or the fictional boy the speech is supposed to be addressed to, understand ἔρως and shares this understanding with the speaker. The speaker merely describes the effects of ἔρως. But this speech is not just about ἔρως: it is also a text about a way of life that is disturbed by ἔρως and judged to be incompatible with it: a life of lucidity, prosperity and respectability. In other words: the life of the φρόνιμος. Ἔρως is understood as a form of disturbance of φρονεῖν, as a phenomenon that wrecks the way of life desired

by any normal citizen or future citizen. As such, ἔρως is assumed to be a modality of μανία, insofar as it is incompatible with φρονεῖν. However, despite the speech being centred on ἔρως and relying on a comprehension of μανία and φρονεῖν, there is no attempt to define or explain any of these notions. As with ἔρως, the speaker just takes for granted that μανία and φρονεῖν are easy and uncontroversial in their identification and understanding. Lysias' speech is not a philosophical text, insofar as it does not submit its basic notions to philosophical treatment.

Yet, to see this as a mark of inferiority is to judge the text according to criteria of a genre it does not even aspire to belong to. From a strictly rhetorical point of view, in many circumstances, not defining a basic concept such as ἔρως can actually be considered an advantage. If we are dealing with a concept that is widely used but poorly understood by your audience and if the audience is not aware of the deficiencies of their own understanding of this concept, then the speaker can use the many confusions, inconsistencies and complexities of the concept to make his point more persuasive. This is the strategy employed by Lysias regarding ἔρως: he uses the complexity of this notion to his advantage through oversimplification. He does this by presenting a unilateral and partial perspective as simply being ἔρως, while ignoring all the aspects that would not conform to his main thesis. The complexity of ἔρως is decomposed into several parts and shown to work separately: on the one hand, the mad components, attributed to the lover; on the other hand, the sane component, φιλία, mutual interest (to a point), mutual sexual enjoyment. But this last aspect of the complex notion of ἔρως is disguised as something other than ἔρως: as a peculiar form of φιλία, modelled on the relationship with one's family and friends, but including the sexual component.

In his attempt to disqualify the lover, Lysias' non-lover produces a very bleak portrayal of both the lover and that which makes him a lover, ἔρως. In what regards the conception of ἔρως at stake in this speech, there is very little that can be considered original. Lysias draws heavily from traditional and well-known τόποι on the nature and effects of ἔρως[130]. Lysias describes the lover as a bumbling fool, a slave to ἔρως, and describes the non-lover as the paragon of sanity and sobriety. The lover is obsessed, living under a compulsion that forces him to see nothing but the object of his desire. He wants

[130] See RUIZ YAMUZA, E., Los dos primeros discursos del Fedro de Platón: topoi homoeróticos, in GIL, L., PASTOR, M., AGUILAR, R., *Corolla Complutensis in memoriam Josephi S. Lasso de la Vega*, Madrid, Ed. de la Universidad Complutense, 1998, 447-457.

the beloved and nothing else. The lover has been robbed of the control he would normally have over his own life. He is not in charge anymore. It is not that the lover is being physically forced or threatened in some way. Yet, his actions are in no way harmonious to what one would expect someone acting of his own accord would do. Neither are they recognized as the lover's own actions once he ceases to be a lover, nor would he seriously imagine himself doing those things before being stricken by ἔρως. There is, in fact, a radical change that takes place the moment he falls in love, a change in the way he behaves. This change is something that happens to the lover; it is not the result of his decisions or actions, he does not choose to fall in love nor, it seems, it would be possible for him to prevent it from happening. The lover succumbs to it, finds himself in a situation he is not responsible for. It is an overwhelming event in relation to which he is completely passive.

The change in behaviour this event operates makes the lover almost unrecognizable to himself and others. To others, it is as if that person was being controlled by someone else that forced him to do whatever he wants. It seems to be an integral part of the experience of being in love to live it as a hostage situation. And, like in a hostage situation, it is not entirely surprising that one develops Stockholm syndrome. However distressing being in love is, there is a fascinating sweetness to it that paradoxically mingles with the pain. But this sweetness in no way diminishes the compulsion. He cannot control himself, for he is controlled by something else, however sweet and fascinating that may be. The lover does things no sane human being would ever dream of doing. It is expected from a sane decent person to take care of his own affairs, to be able to run his own life in a reasonable, preferably successful manner. But the lover is anything but a good manager, his own convenience is the thing furthest from his mind. He has only eyes for his beloved, and, for that reason, he neglects everything else. He does not care for his property, for his family and friends, for his reputation. He forgets all about those things, normally so important, because the beloved, from the moment ἔρως took charge, became the almost exclusive object of concern. This seems to be the result of a distortion in the normal way of thinking. The lover has lost his φρονεῖν. This is made apparent by the strangeness of his behaviour, but also by his own statements regarding his beloved and the condition he is in. Whoever has had the opportunity to hear someone in love talk about his or her beloved can clearly understand this much: their descriptions and statements are usually so hyperbolic to the point of defying belief. A lover describing his beloved draws

a picture so different from what other people see that it seems to represent something altogether apart. Moreover, to the lover all the world seems to orbit around his beloved and derive its meaning from its connection to him. This, however, tends to be a transient, even ephemeral condition. As suddenly as it came, ἔρως can go away, in spite of the lover's own wishes. The lover's condition can therefore be said to have the following features: 1. passive subjection to a constraining force; 2. obsessive fixation on the beloved; 3. extreme neglect of his own well-being; 4. lack of lucidity, a distortion of the normal way of seeing things; 5. Instability. Ἔρως is a kind of madness. The lover acts like a madman and, in a way, he really is mad, the victim of a disease that takes away his sanity and self-control.

But ἔρως is not limited to the negative features Lysias chooses to emphasize. There is another side to the experience of falling in love, which Lysias misrepresents in his attempt to present a unilateral and negative account of the lover. One of the main features of being in love consists in the extreme interest the person in love has for the happiness and well-being of the beloved. In his obsession with the beloved, the lover is committed to the beloved's well-being and happiness. Being in love is also a benevolent project. The lover tries to make the beloved happy, by sheer gratuitous affection. Ἔρως is μανία, but it is also εὔνοια. The foolishness of the lover lies in the fact that, in his obsession for the beloved, he neglects his own affairs. He damages his own interests for the sake of pursuing the beloved. By showing himself incompetent in handling his own affairs, on account of ἔρως, the lover is revealed to be incapable of fulfilling the benevolent project he has been set to. Lysias' non-lover is not affected by any of these problems. The absence of ἔρως does not preclude the presence of εὔνοια. The non-lover, like the lover, is the bearer of a benevolent project. But the εὔνοια the non-lover has for the boy is not hindered by any lack of φρονεῖν. His competence is more than certain. The non-lover is eminently capable not only of dealing with his own affairs, but also of working towards the happiness of the boy he wants to be attached to. By not defining ἔρως, Lysias allows himself the necessary freedom to manipulate the complexity of the phenomenon at will. By skimming over the benevolent aspects of ἔρως and by attributing them to the non-lover, Lysias is suggesting that the special relationship proposed by the non-lover also corresponds to a benevolent project. By stating that the non-lover is

φρόνιμος, he is also showing that this is a project the non-lover, not the μαινόμενος lover, is qualified to fulfil[131].

1.5. A παιδεραστία without ἔρως

Παιδεραστία presents itself as a form of erotic attachment benefiting the beloved. The ἐρώμενος is not the only one that gives; the ἐραστής has something to offer in return. Otherwise, the arrangement would be of no interest to the boy. The ἐραστής speaks of himself as someone who has the boy's best interest in mind and whose intention is to improve his life. This improvement comes in the form of advice, teaching, or, to use the term used by Pausanias in the *Symposium*, φιλοσοφία (184d1), whose purpose is to turn the boy into a decent, successful and prestigious citizen. In asserting his beneficial effect, the lover presumes he has the competence needed to teach and to advise the boy, in other words, he thinks he is good enough to satisfy the requirements of such an important educational task. If the boy is to become σώφρων, he must be guided towards σωφροσύνη by someone who is himself σώφρων. The same principle applies to any ἀρετή that the boy needs to possess in order to become an ἀριστός citizen. The gratification the lover desires from the boy is not merely to return the didactic services rendered by the lover. It is also a token of the φιλία the lover inspires in the beloved, due to him possessing the admirable qualities expected of a good citizen. It is important that the lover be a deserving object of φιλία. Φρονεῖν, besides being essential for the performance of the didactic component of παιδεραστία, constitutes one of the fundamental qualities of a good citizen. Without φρονεῖν, the lover will not only be undeserving of φιλία, but will also have a detrimental effect on the boy's journey towards adulthood and citizenship.

From the profile drawn in Lysias' speech, we can easily conclude that the lover is in no way qualified to perform the task he has proposed from himself. He lacks sanity and wisdom; he lacks self-control; he lacks the good judgement needed to run his own life; he lacks dignity and respect. All these faults are the result of the presence of ἔρως. Ἔρως has taken away the qualities required to accomplish the project set forth by παιδεραστία – and quite ironically so, seeing that it is the presence of ἔρως that ignites the pederastic

[131] See NUSSBAUM, M., Eros and Ethical Norms: Philosophers Respond to a Cultural Dilemma, in: NUSSBAUM, M. and SIHVOLA, J., *The Sleep of Reason*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 2002, 68: "For it [sc. Lysias' speech] persuasively drives a wedge between love's madness and its alleged educational benefits."

project. Without ἔρως there would be no παιδεραστία; with ἔρως, the ἐραστής is nothing more than a fool in love, with nothing of value to offer to his beloved.

Lysias' non-lover presents an alternative to all this, an alternative that, according to the non-lover's arguments, possesses all of παιδεραστία's supposed advantages without any of its flaws. It could be described as a sort of παιδεραστία without ἔρως – with ἔρως obviously meaning not desire, but the condition of being in love. Clearly, the difference between the lover and the non-lover is that the former is in the situation we usually call "being in love" while the latter is not. Lysias' non-lover at all times possesses a form of σωφροσύνη that makes him immune to the influence of ἔρως and enables him to act as custodian of the boy's best interest and as purveyor of the means to achieve it. He is in full control of himself; he is his own master. He has no illusions about the boy's worth or his importance, because he sees reality as it really is. His self-control and mental sanity enable him to manage his life wisely and successfully. He is the paragon of sobriety and trustworthiness.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that the non-lover does not have any sexual desire for the boy. What is an object of reproach in Lysias' speech is not the institution of pederasty as the practice of having some sort of sexual attraction and relationship with an attractive youth, but pederasty as the result of the pathological intervention of ἔρως. He does not advocate a chaste relationship based on a spiritual and intellectual connection. He advocates a sexual relationship based on their common interest. What Lysias argues is that pederasty is too erotic for its own sake; the erotic elements of pederasty prevent it from being a convenient arrangement for any of those involved. This being the case, all these elements must be altogether abandoned – all, that is, except the sexual component. What remains is something very akin to a business deal, an exchange of goods and services between the boy and the non-lover, to the advantage of both. In a way, Lysias' argues that this business-like element constitutes the essential core of pederasty, the core that, for the boy's sake, should be rescued from the ruinous effects of ἔρως.

The speech works like a long advert. The ἐρώμενος is addressed as if he were a consumer who should choose the best product or package of services for himself from whatever is available. Being in love is a serious defect in the product offered by the ἐρῶν, which should therefore be rejected. On the other hand, the relationship proposed by the

non-lover is always advertised under the guise of a sensible arrangement for both. The non-lover seems to consider every relationship from the point of view of an investor trying to figure out if the business is worth the risk, and asserts, without a gleam of self-doubt, that this is the right way to judge it. This perspective pervades the whole speech and is effectively canonised by it. Calculating self-interest is used throughout the speech as the main criterion of the presence of φρονεῖν. Deciding according to this criterion, being able to choose what is best for oneself is the mark of the sane and respectful man. This perspective, of course, is very different from the lover's. He does not seem to consider the convenience, the utility, the advantage of pursuing the boy he loves. He loves him and, under these conditions, it seems reasonable enough that he would pursue him, try to win him over, even if it puts him at risk of losing his property, his friends and family. His beloved is worth everything to him, everything else's value pales in comparison to his beloved. From the non-lover's perspective, this, of course, is an absurd way of thinking caused by the noxious effects of ἔρως. The non-lover's way is the right way and every alternative can only by the result of some sort of derangement. From the non-lover's perspective, he is in complete possession of φρονεῖν.

The beloved, according to the usual conception of ἔρως and the conventions of παιδεραστία, is free from the grip of ἔρως. Therefore, he can be addressed by the non-lover as φρόνιμος, as the non-lover himself is. The beloved's situation is similar to the non-lover's, since both are free from the grip of ἔρως[132]. The beloved's motives to enter into a relationship, erotic or non-erotic, will have nothing to do with ἔρως. Since the beloved is φρόνιμος, Lysias' non-lover assumes that his motivation is self-interest. Therefore, the non-lover appeals to the boy's self-interest by demonstrating how he is

[132] This statement requires some qualification. We have observed in the previous chapter that there is a correlation between φρονεῖν and age or maturity. Being in possession of φρονεῖν is something that comes with age, with education, as one learns to observe, comply with and understand the beliefs and rules of the πόλις. In Lysias' speech, the non-lover, according to the conventions of παιδεραστία, will be a grown man. As he is unaffected by ἔρως (or any other form of μανία), he will by default be in possession of φρονεῖν. The young man the speech is addressed to, however, is not a grown man, and, as such, will not be fully in possession of φρονεῖν. He is in a liminal state, between the absence of φρονεῖν that characterises childhood, and the possession of it that characterises maturity. Given the right education and the opportunity to grow, the young man will acquire φρονεῖν and be a citizen as sane and as valid as anyone else. In this regard, he contrasts with the ἐραστής. The ἐραστής, in spite of being a grown man, already educated in the ways of the πόλις, is not in possession of φρονεῖν due to the invasion of ἔρως. Regarding φρονεῖν, he is in a position of inferiority in relation both to the non-lover and the young man. In the scale of possession of φρονεῖν implicitly drawn by Lysias' speech, the non-lover, as someone in full possession of φρονεῖν, is in the uppermost position, followed by the young man, who is due to acquire it, and the ἐραστής, who has lost it. The loss of φρονεῖν due to ἔρως, however, is an extraordinary and temporary occurrence, which means that the ἐραστής' position in the scale will change dramatically as soon as ἔρως retreats.

better equipped to give the boy what he wants. The non-lover is better equipped for this purpose, *because* he is not in love with him. All arguments used, therefore, spring from this basic principle. What follows is the demonstration of the lover's pernicious effect on the beloved's life opposed to the non-lover as a source of advantages. This programme covers several aspects of the beloved's life: his relationship with his family and friends, the prospect of social advancement, his reputation, the improvement of his character[133]. All these aspects will be damaged by the lover and benefited by the non-lover.

The appeal to the boy's self-interest, however, is not an innovation engendered by the non-lover; it is rather a decisive element of παιδεραστία itself that is cleverly used against it. The official speech of παιδεραστία already includes a very conspicuous appeal to the boy's self-interest. The lover is not only someone who desires something from the boy; he presents himself as someone who brings a precious gift: his worldly knowledge, his political and civic expertise. The didactic component of παιδεραστία is put forward as the benefit to be imparted to the beloved. Both the lover and the beloved are said to gain from this relationship. It is this element of giving and receiving that the author of this speech so cleverly exploits. Considering that, according to the conventions of παιδεραστία, the boy himself is not in love, it would certainly be rather foolish of him to grant his sexual favours for nothing. The boy wants to gain something for himself, especially from a pederastic relationship. The strategy used by the non-lover is to show that the lover is in no condition to give to the beloved what has been promised. For that reason, any appeal to the boy's self-interest can only result in a rejection of the lover's suit. But rejecting the lover is only half the job: the non-lover also has to convince the boy to yield to him. He does this by claiming to be the purveyor of the same benefits promised by the lover. The non-lover brings to the table the same the lover says he would. The difference is that the lack of φρονεῖν that plagues the lover prevents him for delivering on his promises, whereas the non-lover is perfectly capable of doing so.

1.6. Ἔρως as μανία and Lysias' conception of φρονεῖν

[133] On the non-lover's "special relationship" as a safe alternative to normal παιδεραστία, in what the ἐρώμενος' reputation is concerned, see BUCCIONI, E., Keeping It Secret: Reconsidering Lysias' Speech in Plato's "Phaedrus", *Phoenix* 61 (2007), 15-38, especially 21ff.

The foundation for the alternative between lover and non-lover can be found in the conception of ἔρως present in this text, especially its connection and similarity to the common conception of μανία.[134] It was quite frequent to describe being in love as a sort of madness. This, of course, could be understood as a mere hyperbole. However, there are enough similarities and points of contact to prevent that hyperbole from being an absurdity. Indeed, both ἔρως and μανία were traditionally described as invasive forces, as exogenous powers that took control of the ones they invaded and replaced them at their life's helm. Like the lover, the madman was someone placed outside normal human society; his actions, his desires and his endeavours were very different from normal people and quite incomprehensible to them. Both behave strangely and erratically, often to their own detriment – which opposes what is probably the most common rule of conduct: to look out for one's own good. Both can be seen showing intense desires for objects whose merits any normal person would not find sufficient to inspire so great a craving and many troubles. Both seem to have a disturbed perspective of reality; but that which normal people can easily recognize as delusions, they take as the most certain and obvious thing in the world and act accordingly. From the perspective of someone who is not affected by madness or love, the way they think and behave can be as alien as if they were living in a different world. In a way, every lover and every madman seem to live in different worlds from normal people, as well as each other, and, as such, are isolated from the community by their own condition. There are, however, some differences between these two phenomena. If ἔρως might usually be described as μαινόμενος, not all μανία could be considered ἐρωτική. In a way, μανία can be understood as either the genus of ἔρως or as a hyperbolic epithet that underlines the demented aspects of this phenomenon. Either way, there seems to be always some portion of μανία in ἔρως. Ἔρως can be perceived as a very specific form of μανία, whose behaviour is caused by a particular event – being overtaken by the beloved's beauty – and whose impulses and actions are directed towards a very particular object – the beloved.

The link between these two phenomena seems to extend to the fact that, in spite of their differences, they are both said to be opposed to φρονεῖν. The sane way of seeing, understanding, behaving can be interrupted, completely overthrown by any of these two phenomena. Yet, however powerful and destructive they may be, they are usual

[134] See chapter II, p. 130ff.

understood as occasional events, whose power and area of influence is somewhat circumscribed. This is true in the world presented in Lysias' speech. The lover may be a raving lunatic, but he lives in the midst of a community full of sane and decent people - of which the non-lover is the perfect paragon. The lover is the exception, not the rule. The majority of members of this community do not behave in such a strange, harmful and shameful way, nor do they indulge themselves in such deliriums. They know very well what to do with their lives and are sane enough to see reality as it really is. They are very competent in governing their own desires and are always in control of themselves. They are also said to be extremely competent in figuring what is best for them and in achieving what they want. They see very clearly through every situation they are in and are capable of acting on every occasion in the right way. They have defined their priorities very well and understand that they must always strive for what is best for themselves and that self-interest is the principle each one of them and everyone else should live their lives by. The idea of losing their sovereignty is appalling to them, for it would turn them into slaves. These are the good citizens, those who behave decently, whose mind is not diseased and whose sanity has not been taken away. This lot is the one Lysias' non-lover belongs to. This is made very clear all through the speech: every fault found in the maddened lover finds its counterpart in one of the non-lover's qualities. The non-lover is the paragon of sanity, self-control and sobriety in a community that holds those values very dear.

The lover and the non-lover are more than just characters in a literary text. They represent ways of life. The life of madness versus the life of sanity, the life of slavery versus the life of sovereignty, the life of turbulence versus the life of self-control, the life of odd, self-destructive behaviour versus the life of intelligent success. When the boy chooses a suitor, he is also choosing a mentor; when he chooses a mentor he is somehow choosing a way of life. When he is encouraged to choose the non-lover, he is being encouraged to become like the non-lover, to adopt as his own the ideal the non-lover embodies and his community approves. Far from corrupting the boy it is supposedly addressed to, the speech actually exhorts him to become as good as he can be. Through the ἐγκώμιον of σωφροσύνη and the ψόγος of the disease that is ἔρως, he encourages the boy to become σώφρων.

However, the opposition between μανία and φρονεῖν delineated in this speech is not limited to the contrast between lover and non-lover. Φρονεῖν is the normal perspective, shared by the whole community. This is one of the basic assumptions of the

speech, which is, in this respect, entirely conventional. The φρονεῖν the non-lover claims for himself is justified by his conformity with the socially shared perspective. The hostility towards ἔρως is part of this socially shared perspective, which only adds credibility to the arguments. The non-lover appears as the epitome of the φρόνιμος, as understood by the conventional values of the socially shared perspective: well-adjusted, well-behaved, in control of his emotions, able to lead his life successfully. The values displayed are all conventional: family and friends, property, health, and, especially, reputation. But the boy as well is assumed to be φρόνιμος. He is addressed as someone that, in spite of his youth, will be able to identify where his best interest lies. That he is addressed as φρόνιμος is also a form of flattery, a way of appealing to the boy's pride and worry for his own reputation. By implying that choosing the non-lover is the φρόνιμος option, the non-lover is putting is simultaneously flattering the boy and pressuring him into choosing the special relationship over the pederastic relationship proposed by the lover, lest he be considered less than φρόνιμος. But the canonicity of the socially shared perspective is such that it extends, according to Lysias' speech, even to the disturbed lover. The lover's illness is presented as a temporary affliction, as a disturbance of φρονεῖν that will with time give place to a perspective that is considered normal and healthy. The cessation of this disturbance corresponds to a *recovery* of φρονεῖν. The lover is understood as being perfectly healthy and normal both after and before being affected by ἔρως. Being in love is an exceptional and transitory occurrence[135]. The altered perspective that corresponds to being in love in no way establishes any sort of canonicity. There is no doubt or hesitation about where φρονεῖν resides and in what it may consist. The standard always remains the same: the socially shared perspective. Being in love, as any disturbance of φρονεῖν, is but an island of madness in an ocean of lucidity.

1.7. Lysias' rhetorical strategy: false alternative and equivocation

The effect of Lysias' speech depends on the fact that the term ἔρως is equivocal. As we have seen in the previous chapter, ἔρως can designate either the phenomenon we

[135] The speech is silent regarding what causes this exceptional occurrence. Its transitory nature might suggest an exogenous, divine, cause. This suggestion is reinforced by the fact that the lover is described as being under compulsion, as being passive in relation to some force that disturbs him. See PENDER, E., A Transfer of Energy: Lyric ἔρως in *Phaedrus*, in: DESTREÉ, P. and FRITZ-GREGOR, H. (eds.), *Plato and the Poets*, Leiden, Brill, 327-348, especially 329-330.

call “being in love”, which includes, but is not limited to, a sexual component, but also, in more general terms, any kind of desire. More specifically, the kind of desire associated with this more general sense of ἔρως is sexual desire. The fact that Lysias’ non-lover is not in love with the boy does not by any means imply that he does not desire him sexually. Of course, the motives for the non-lover to woo the beloved can be more than sexual. He might find himself attracted to other attributes, and actually enjoy the boy’s company – that is what he himself says in 233a1-3. The non-lover need not be completely cold and heartless. He just needs to be in control of himself, not be passionate. In this sense, it would not be entirely absurd to imagine the so-called non-lover as actually being somewhat affected by ἔρως. But the ἔρως at stake in this situation would be more akin to the moderate ἔρως of the Euripidean odes, a σώφρων ἔρως, than to the wild, passionate love that sweeps one off one’s feet and changes one’s life. This is entirely compatible with the ideal of life that is at stake in the figure of Lysias’ non-lover: a sane, moderate life, without excesses, that complies with the rules and expectations of the community, and is therefore praised and honoured. In short, a balanced and well regulated life. Wild ἔρως, ἔρως as μανία, is what is condemned in the speech, and found to be incompatible with the life of a proper citizen.

But this is a rather benevolent, almost naïve reading of Lysias’ speech. It is the kind of reading expected of, say, a young and inexperienced boy, who might be attracted by the special relationship proposed. To imagine that all those protestations of φιλία actually amount to true affection is to disregard the callous way in which the desired relationship with the boy is framed: as an exchange of goods and services. The argument invoking variety of choice in 231d6-e2 is just the most striking example of this. But there is an element of the special relationship proposed by the non-lover that clearly is incompatible with any naïve reading of this speech: the sexual component. The fact that this φιλία comes with strings attached is already more than enough to make one suspicious. None of the other examples of φιλία Lysias presents includes a sexual component. The relationship the non-lover proposes is unique in that way. It is supposed to be a relationship similar to the relationship between a child and his parents, between siblings or between friends, but with added bonus (for the non-lover) of sexual gratification. The sexual component of this special relationship sits awkwardly with those other instances of φιλία. In the case of παιδεραστία, the presence of the sexual component was already awkward enough, to the point of having to be treated, at most, using

euphemistic language. The official discourse of παιδεραστία clearly recognises the reputational risks the boy incurs if he accepts to yield to his lover's advances. It tries to frame this neatly within the didactic aspect of the relationship and to explain the gratification allowed to the lover as a manifestation of the φιλία the boy has for someone who has provided him with such great gifts, and that displays so many admirable qualities.

The conception of φρονεῖν in this speech disqualifies the lover from performing the services required in the pederastic relationship and proposes the non-lover as the φρόνιμος alternative to the candidate overcome by ἔρως. But this conception of φρονεῖν also presents a very good justification for the absurdities of παιδεραστία, sc. παιδεραστία lacks φρονεῖν. However, if ἔρως can explain and even excuse the awkward presence of the sexual component in παιδεραστία, the same cannot be said of the special relationship proposed by the non-lover. The awkwardness of the sexual component within παιδεραστία's benevolent didactic project is at least justified by the fact that ἔρως itself tends to be sexually charged. Ἔρως includes both the urge to contribute to the beloved's happiness and the urge to be with the beloved, sexually and otherwise. The non-lover claims he wants both, with the benefit of actually being φρόνιμος. But how can this conception of φρονεῖν conciliate the opposing demands of working for the boys' happiness and making him face the reputational risks associated with yielding to sexual advances, outside the accepted framework of παιδεραστία and without the excuse afforded by the φρονεῖν-disturbing effects of ἔρως? The absence of ἔρως is not incompatible with the presence of εὔνοια. The absence of ἔρως is not incompatible with the presence of sexual desire. But, in this context, the absence of ἔρως is incompatible with the presence of both εὔνοια *and* sexual desire.

The absurdities of παιδεραστία can be easily explained and excused by the absurd nature of ἔρως itself. But what excuse can one make for the absurdities of a proposition made by someone who is supposed to be entirely φρόνιμος? If we take into account that the conception of φρονεῖν at stake in the speech bends sharply towards calculating self-interest, it is quite reasonable to assume that this weird conjunction of benevolence and sexual desire, absent ἔρως, can only be explained in those terms. If that is the case, the special relationship proposed becomes something altogether different from what the naïve interpretation would suppose: the boy will actually be exchanging his sexual favours for whatever benefits the non-lover claims to be able to impart him. This becomes a

supposedly mutually advantageous affair between the two, not an instance of φιλία akin to the examples provided by Lysias[136].

But without ἔρως, what accounts for the claimed presence of the benevolent urge in the non-lover? The non-lover is neither parent, nor brother, nor relative, nor friend. If he were either of those things, there would already be φιλία, which already includes the benevolent component. The special relationship would not contribute with anything that was not already there. Assuming that the non-lover is indeed benevolent, the only difference between these relationships and the special relationship proposed by the non-lover is, in fact, the presence of sex. But if sex becomes the main motivation, the main benefit to be accrued according to the cold calculation of the φρόνιμος, it becomes clear that any benevolence derived from this relationship is not actually benevolence at all, but simply the currency used to pay for the desired sexual favours.

However, the most basic and effective argumentative strategy used by Lysias is the setting of what amounts to a false alternative. All through the speech, it is silently suggested that the boy has to choose between two alternatives: either yield to a lover, or to the non-lover. *Tertium non datur*. But *tertium* indeed *datur*. And the *tertium quid* is simple: not yield to anyone. The way the alternative is put by Lysias corresponds simultaneously to a vestigial remnant of the pederastic matrix of the speech and to a fatal flaw in its design. If this were a classical pederastic wooing speech, the alternative presented would be simply between two alternatives: to yield or not to yield. That is the question around which the lover's arguments will be built. He will have to convince his favourite that it is preferable to accept the lover's advances than the opposite. Lysias' speech presents an alternative to this dichotomy by introducing the distinction between two types of suitor: the lover and the non-lover. But, while doing so, he radically changes the terms of the original alternative and treats yielding to a suitor, lover or non-lover, as

[136] The Greek notion of φιλία, however, is not incompatible with relationships based upon mutual advantage and utility. Φιλία is an equivocal notion that can describe any non-inimical relationship, thereby including family relationships, friends in the modern sense, but also anyone with whom one has a mutually advantageous connection. Someone that does something good for you in exchange for some benefit can be considered a φίλος. See KONSTAN, D., *Friendship in the Classical World*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997, 53ff. Lysias takes full advantage of the equivocal meaning of φιλία, putting at the same level, e.g., parental love and mutually useful non-affectionate relationships. However, to give sex in exchange for something is a more delicate affair. In any case, it becomes clear that the non-lover is not doing what he does for the boy's sake, but rather to achieve what he really wants: sex. On the role of φιλία in this speech, see also ADKINS, A. W. H., The Speech of Lysias in Plato's *Phaedrus*, in LOUDEN, R. B., SCHOLLMEIER, P. (ed.), *The Greeks and us. Essays in honor of Arthur W. H. Adkins*, Chicago/London, Chicago University Press, 1996, 224-240.

if that were mandatory. He does this in the most effective way: by simply ignoring the third option and proceeding as if it did not even exist. This is the weakest point in Lysias argument, the point which, in conjunction with the other weak points already mentioned, if pressed hard enough, will make the whole argumentative building crumble down into a pile of rubble.

The clever aspect of Lysias' speech is that it uses παιδεραστία's own conventions against it. Παιδεραστία's sexual component is important, but not unashamed. It has to be justified, quite awkwardly, through the benefits granted by its didactic component. But the understanding that ἔρως corresponds to a form of μανία and that the lover lacks φρονεῖν can be explored in such a way as to demonstrate that a lover will lack the abilities and necessary attributes to perform the didactic services demanded by παιδεραστία's conventions. This internal contradiction is supposedly solved by presenting an alternative: a παιδεραστία without ἔρως. But the supposed advantage of this arrangement is cancelled by the fact that, without ἔρως, it becomes even more susceptible to accusations of calculating self-interest and of being mercenary. In the absence of ἔρως, the internal contradictions of παιδεραστία turn from foolish to deceitful. By framing the matter in such a way as to ignore the alternative of not choosing any of the suitors, Lysias' non-lover multiplies the degree of deceit exponentially.

In addition to this, there is another major flaw that Lysias' παιδεραστία without ἔρως inherits from its pederastic matrix without addressing it. Παιδεραστία needs to justify its own existence as a didactic enterprise. In order words, it has to explain why a lover would be better suited to perform the didactic duties that could normally be assumed by any of the boy's older male relatives or friends, without needing to yield to sexual advances. To put it bluntly, in terms that Lysias' non-lover would surely understand: why would the boy accept to pay for something he could just as well get for free elsewhere? This is a question that remains unanswered, a question that is not addressed or even acknowledged by Lysias. The absence of a satisfactory answer destroys Lysias' argument by turning its own internal commercial logic against it. Since he has the choice not to yield, even a boy that only considers his self-interest in the way the non-lover understands it, would, if he was in possession of φρονεῖν, choose the option: "none of the above".

2. The First Speech of Socrates

2.1. The fixed element and the hypothesis of Socrates' first speech: τὸ φρόνιμον ἐγκωμιάζειν, δὲ τὸ ἄφρον ψέγειν and ἔρως as νόσος

Like Lysias' speech, the first speech of Socrates is epideictic. Both speeches present an apparently outlandish thesis; both speeches try to do this in a clever and ingenious way; both strive to impress their audience, represented by Phaedrus. Also, the connexion between the speeches is clearly one characterized by competition. This is a common feature in epideictic literature, and one that is very saliently explored in the transition between the speech of Lysias and the first speech of Socrates.

What we witness at this point in the dialogue is a strange game or, as it were, a "dance" between Phaedrus and Socrates regarding the value of Lysias' speech and the possibility and nature of an alternative to it. It is the beginning of a complex process, with many subtle nuances and changes, that will culminate in the establishment of a contract between Phaedrus and Socrates setting the terms in which the next speech is to be delivered. Socrates' initial reluctance in even engaging with Lysias' speech will be replaced by an apparently reluctant negative assessment of its quality. This will then lead to the sketching of a possible alternative or response to Lysias' speech and the setting of terms and conditions in which an apparently ever reluctant Socrates is urged, and ultimately forced, to produce his speech. This simplified description of the different stages of the process that results in Socrates' first speech has to be qualified by the decisive presence of irony and ambiguity throughout. It is never entirely clear whether Socrates means what he says – and in many cases, it is almost certain that he does not. Socrates' reluctance throughout the whole process might not always be what it seems – as we shall see that at some moments Socrates is the one actually pressing forward and leading the way towards the production of the speech. This, however does not diminish the importance of Phaedrus' peculiar form of φιλολογία as one of the main factors leading towards Socrates' first speech. Rather, Socrates and Phaedrus both seem to alternate in leading the proceedings and taking the game towards its outcome, with Phaedrus sometimes pressuring Socrates into criticizing Lysias' speech and producing one of his own, and with Socrates at some points making use of Phaedrus' appetite for rhetorical display to set and define the agenda. It is complex game that we are going to analyse at

some length in the next few pages – so as to understand not only the terms in which Socrates' first speech is set, but also how these terms came about.

In this transition (234c6-237a6), what begins as an assessment of the speech as a display piece gradually turns into a challenge to surpass it. Phaedrus is obviously very impressed with the speech he has just read and praises its use of language with particular enthusiasm: "οὐχ ὑπερφυῶς τά τε ἄλλα καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν εἰρῆσθαι;" (234c6f.). Socrates' reaction is not without irony. At first, he seems to lavish praises on the speech as well, but he does so in a rather oblique way, by identifying Phaedrus' enjoyment and enthusiasm as the source of his own. The language he uses is quite remarkable. Socrates was stricken marvellously: "Δαιμονίως (...) ὥστε με ἐκπλαγῆναι" (234d2)[137]; this he has experienced by watching Phaedrus' gladness while reading the speech, rather than by listening to the speech itself: "καὶ τοῦτο ἐγὼ ἔπαθον διὰ σέ, ὦ Φαῖδρε, πρὸς σὲ ἀποβλέπων, ὅτι ἐμοὶ ἐδόκεις γάνυσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου μεταξὺ ἀναγιγνώσκων" (234d2ff.). Socrates states he feels an admiration by proxy. Because Socrates supposedly believes that Phaedrus has a better understanding of the speech, he apparently decides to follow him, as if partaking in Phaedrus' bacchic frenzy: καὶ ἑπόμενος συνεβάκχευσα μετὰ σοῦ τῆς θείας κεφαλῆς (234d5f.). The first stage of the game is one where Socrates' resists even assessing the quality of Lysias' speech – he just mimicks or reflects Phaedrus' own enthusiasm. It is interesting that Phaedrus' reaction to Socrates' reply is to not take it seriously. Socrates reflects Phaedrus, but Phaedrus cannot avoid recognising that Socrates is toying with him. Socrates' irony is noticeable even to Phaedrus, and Phaedrus will have none of that: he wants an honest appraisal of Lysias' speech, or, perhaps more likely, a praise of it that coincides with his own, but is also serious and earnest. In other words, he wants someone who shares his own enthusiasm for Lysias' achievement.

What forces Socrates to abandon his supposed coyness and actually engage in assessing the quality of Lysias' speech is Phaedrus' hyperbolic praise of it. In this praise, Phaedrus goes beyond a mere appreciation of the use of language in the speech. In other words, Phaedrus turns away from what might be called, anticipating Socrates (235a1), the rhetorical component and starts praising the content of the speech. He does this by asking whether there is anyone in Greece that would say more (πλείω) and more important

[137] This is the first use of the verb ἐκπλήττειν in the *Phaedrus*. See Chapter I, p. 21, n. 11.

things (μείζω) on the same subject (234e2f.)[138]. This praise, however, is susceptible of two alternative interpretations, and it is this ambiguity that will be played with throughout this passage. According to Phaedrus, Lysias has not only covered the most important points related to his subject-matter, but has actually *exhausted* the subject, having used all possible arguments. As a rhetorician, Lysias is above all others, and the speech he has just produced has said everything that can be said about its subject. This is an extraordinary claim. Taken without any qualification, this amounts to a declaration of simple and absolute perfection. In other words, the speech is unsurpassable and imperfectible in every way, because it says everything that needs to be said about its subject. And yet, this declaration of perfection can and perhaps should be read as being tacitly qualified by the fact that it is being applied to an epideictic speech, and voiced by a character whose φιλολογία makes him focus on the flashier components of rhetoric, as it were. In this regard, it is perhaps reasonable to understand this to be a declaration of perfection of the speech *as an epideictic piece*, i.e., as being all that one would expect this kind of rhetorical piece to be. The concern for the truth, or to provide an accurate and exhaustive account of the true nature of ἔρως (whatever that may be), takes a very secondary role – if it is at all explicitly considered.

Socrates' reaction builds on this ambiguity and takes it even further with a twist of irony. He expresses surprise at Phaedrus' new focus on the content of the speech, and puts aside the need to praise the speech on the grounds of having said τὰ δέοντα (234e5). This is itself an ambiguous term. On the one hand, τὰ δέοντα can be understood in relation to the epideictic task. In this case, it would not make sense to praise Lysias for having done what he had to do in the first place: produce a plausible speech according to the rules, conventions and expectations of epideictic rhetoric. It would go without saying that such an expert rhetorician would say what he ought to say in a display piece such as this. It is the very least one expects from someone like Lysias. But, on the other hand, τὰ δέοντα can be understood in relation to the truth. This might be a concern for Socrates, but it does not seem to be so for Phaedrus, who will understand τὰ δέοντα in the former sense, not in the latter. Phaedrus' opinion of Lysias' speech is that it is superlatively good,

[138] For the interpretation of μείζω as "more important" see VERDENIUS, Notes on Plato's *Phaedrus*, *Mnemosyne* 8 (1955), 265-289, and DE VRIES, *op. cit., ad locum*.

both in its form, and its content, i.e., both in the way he uses language and how he successfully employs arguments to achieve a plausible defence of his thesis.

Socrates refuses to address this second aspect, and the ambiguity of τὰ δέοντα hints at the possibility that he understands the problems relating to content in relation to the truth, not the epideictic purposes of the speech. But Socrates' refusal is itself ambiguous. The use of preterition actually emphasizes that which is dismissed or put aside. From Socrates' point of view, and taking into account his peculiar φιλολογία, which is, as we have seen, radically different from Phaedrus', the very least one expects from someone who claims to be an expert is to say all that he ought on the subject he is talking about. And, in this case, the fact that he dismisses the matter of content altogether as being not even worth considering makes one wonder if Lysias actually said τὰ δέοντα at all – in both senses of the term. The possibility that Lysias might have failed in this regard is at least left open. Socrates ends up assenting to Phaedrus' assessment of the quality of the speech's content, but he does it because his supposed οὐδενία in this matters made him not pay attention to that aspect of the speech. Socrates' supposed worthlessness in rhetorical matters will be abundantly refuted by close to everything that follows this exchange in this dialogue, and be shown as an obvious instance of Socratic irony. The door remains open for the possibility that Lysias' speech is less than perfect also in what regards its content.

Having apparently laid the assessment of the quality of the content to rest, Socrates concentrates his criticism in τὸ ῥητορικόν, supposedly the only aspect he paid attention to during the reading (235a1ff.). Socrates' assessment in this respect is the opposite of Phaedrus' lavish praise. Even in this Lysias is found lacking. Socrates accuses Lysias of being repetitive, of saying the same over and over again (235a2ff.). He suggests two possible causes for this: either he could not find more things to say ("οὐ πάνυ εὐπορῶν τοῦ πολλὰ λέγειν"), or he did not care to find them ("οὐδὲν αὐτῷ μέλον τοῦ τοιούτου"). And then, to finish his assessment in glory, he delivers the *coup de grâce*: καὶ ἐφαίνετο δή μοι νεανιεύεσθαι ἐπιδεικνύμενος ὡς οἷός τε ὢν ταὐτὰ ἑτέρως τε καὶ ἑτέρως λέγων ἀμφοτέρως εἰπεῖν ἄριστα (235a5-6). Socrates sees through Lysias' epideictic purpose. He wants to show off his rhetorical expertise, he is not really interested in finding new and accurate arguments to defend the thesis that sustains the speech. He just wants to show off, like young men are so fond of doing, that he can say excellently the same thing in different ways.

One should note that Socrates' negative assessment of the so-called rhetorical component of Lysias' speech has a direct and serious impact on the assessment of the speech's content. He was repetitive because he could not or would not find anything else to say. The speech lacks in variety, which is an aspect of τὸ ῥητορικόν, because it lacks in things to say, which has to do with content. By criticizing the speech's repetitiveness, Socrates is suggesting that there is more that Lysias could have said. This means that, according to Socrates, the speech lacks in both the *formal perfection* and the *material perfection* Phaedrus claimed. And it fails in both regards even by the standards of the epideictic genre. On the subject of this speech, one could at least say πλείω, and thereby have avoided unnecessary repetitions. The relatively small matter of the repetitive nature of the speech will make way for enormous changes of enormous consequence. By emphasizing the lack of perfection of the speech, Socrates is already delineating the whole space that will be crossed until the end of the palinode: further and further away from Lysias' speech, both in terms of form and content. By implying that the speech is incomplete, Socrates is hinting at the possibility of alternatives to what Lysias has said. It is possible to say something else, and even something different from what Lysias has said.

The lack of perfection is a direct threat to the speech's supposed epideictic effectiveness. The purpose of the epideictic speech is to show the orator's rhetorical prowess, to dazzle and impress the audience. The ease with which the supposedly ignorant and rhetorically worthless Socrates finds serious flaws in Lysias' speech shows the vulnerability of its claim to epideictic effectiveness. The superlative praise of Lysias' use of language will be put aside, not because Phaedrus no longer recognises the qualities of the speech in this regard, but because Socrates' remarks hit at a much more essential point. The possibility of a better alternative is a serious threat to Lysias' speech. The suggestion that there are points, even essential points, that Lysias may have left out opens up the possibility that a different speech might be produced. How different that might be is left undertermined, but at this stage one might even consider the possibility of a speech that is altogether different from Lysias', even in the basic thesis it has to defend. This is a possibility that perhaps does not occur to Phaedrus, as he seems to be thinking only according to the conventions and expectations of the epideictic genre. But even in this regard, the possibility of an alternative is a serious threat. That is why Phaedrus needs to defend the speech on this ground, insisting that Lysias' has left nothing out (οὐδὲν

παραλέλοιπεν), and reiterating that no one would be able to say more and more important things on the same subject (πλείω καὶ πλείονος ἄξια) (235b2ff.). According to Phaedrus, there is no better alternative to what Lysias said.

Socrates does not agree. And he uses an argument of authority to reinforce the idea that there might be an alternative to Lysias' speech, by invoking "παλαιοὶ γὰρ καὶ σοφοὶ ἄνδρες τε καὶ γυναῖκες" (235b7) who have spoken and written better about the subject. He explicitly names Sappho and Anacreon among these[139]. Other people have already done what Phaedrus says to be impossible: say more and worthier things about this subject. It is important to note that the superiority of this alternative does not pertain simply to the form. It is not just the case that those people expressed themselves better. They are superior to Lysias also in what regards the content. This implies that there is more to say about this subject than what was said by Lysias. The vagueness of what this alternative might be once again admits the possibility of something altogether different from Lysias'. It is as if we were being continuously teased with the possibility of a speech that expresses a very different perspective on ἔρως. And yet, it seems as if the margin of alternative is at all times being reduced to what is defined and determined by the epideictic genre, and by the content of Lysias' speech itself.

Of course, the possibility of a speech that might say the exact opposite of what Lysias has said does not come into play explicitly at this point. But, as we have seen, any better alternative, even one that understands ἔρως in similar terms to Lysias' speech is a serious threat to Phaedrus' claim of perfection. When pressed by an incredulous Phaedrus to name his sources, Socrates confesses he cannot (235c1ff.). He knows he must have heard it from someone else, since he feels his chest full of things to say about this subject that are both different and not worse (ἑτερα μὴ χείρω) than what Lysias said (235c4-5).

[139] Some have found the reference to these poets in this context perplexing. Cf. ROWE *ad* 235c3-4: "How on earth could Socrates have heard anything in praise of the *non*-lover from Sappho and Anacreon, of all people – two of the best-known love-poets of antiquity?". This perplexity is understandable, if one reads the transition between the speeches as being from the start limited by the explicit hypothesis of Lysias' speech. As we have seen, that is not necessarily the case, as Socrates' use of preterition at least suggests a much wider range of alternatives. Therefore, it seems clear that Socrates is not referring to the explicit hypothesis of Lysias' speech, but to the general subject matter: ἔρως, in particular, ἔρως as an external and invasive force, as a form of disease and madness. This view is confirmed both by the reference to Sappho and Anacreon (mentioned both as celebrated poets, but probably also as representatives of the rich tradition of Greek love poetry) and by the use of traditional love τόποι even in Socrates' first speech. In other words, Sappho and Anacreon did not, in fact, praise the non-lover. But what is at stake here is more than a praise of the non-lover: it is the nature, role and value of ἔρως itself. On that matter, Sappho, Anacreon and other poets have said a great deal. See PENDER, E., Sappho and Anacreon in Plato's Phaedrus, *Leeds International Classical Studies* 6 (2007), 1-56.

He himself would be incapable of being the source of this rhetorical outpour, due to his stupidity, ἀμαθία (235c6-7). It is therefore clear that this must have come from other sources (ἐξ ἀλλοτρίων ποθὲν ναμάτων), which he has forgotten[140]. At first reading, this may seem just another of Socrates' avowals of ignorance, and a ploy to create distance between himself and the speech he is about to produce. It is certainly an instance of the common Socratic strategy of attributing his statements to other sources. But the argument is so silly and absurd, and the reference so quickly abandoned, that it is anything but persuasive. It is also very implausible that he might have forgotten the identity of his supposed sources. It is relatively clear that Socrates himself is the source. And this introduces, in a silent and subterranean way, the idea of sudden inspiration, which will play an important role at other points in the dialogue.

The idea of hearing another speech delights Phaedrus. He challenges Socrates to surpass Lysias, a truly epideictic challenge[141]. He also sets conditions for this challenge.

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[140] 235c2ff.: "νῦν μὲν οὕτως οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν: δῆλον δὲ ὅτι τινῶν ἀκήκοα, ἢ που Σαπφοῦς τῆς καλῆς ἢ Ἀνακρέοντος τοῦ σοφοῦ ἢ καὶ συγγραφέων τινῶν. πόθεν δὴ τεκμαιρόμενος λέγω; **πλῆρές πως, ὦ δαιμόνιε, τὸ στῆθος ἔχων αἰσθάνομαι** παρὰ ταῦτα ἂν ἔχειν εἰπεῖν ἕτερα μὴ χείρω. ὅτι μὲν οὖν παρά γε ἐμαυτοῦ οὐδὲν αὐτῶν ἐννενόηκα, εὖ οἶδα, συνειδὼς ἐμαυτῷ ἀμαθίαν· **λείπεται δὴ οἶμαι ἐξ ἀλλοτρίων ποθὲν ναμάτων διὰ τῆς ἀκοῆς πεπληρῶσθαί με δίκην ἀγγείου**. ὑπὸ δὲ νωθείας αὖ καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἐπιλέλησμαι, ὅπως τε καὶ ὧντινων ἤκουσα.". In this passage, Socrates compares himself to a usually empty jar or vessel (ἀγγεῖον) that has been filled. The source is exogenous, since Socrates' worthlessness and lack of rhetorical ability prevents it from being endogenous. The metaphor used in this passage is a clear allusion to another passage of the *corpus platonicum*, namely *Symposium* 175d3ff.: "καὶ τὸν Σωκράτη καθίζεσθαι καὶ εἰπεῖν ὅτι εὖ ἂν ἔχοι, φάναι, ὦ Ἀγάθων, **εἰ τοιοῦτον εἴη ἡ σοφία ὥστ' ἐκ τοῦ πληρεστέρου εἰς τὸ κενώτερον ῥεῖν ἡμῶν, ἐὰν ἁπτώμεθα ἀλλήλων, ὥσπερ τὸ ἐν ταῖς κύλιξιν ὕδωρ τὸ διὰ τοῦ ἐρίου ῥέον ἐκ τῆς πληρεστέρας εἰς τὴν κενωτέραν**. εἰ γὰρ οὕτως ἔχει καὶ ἡ σοφία, πολλοῦ τιμῶμαι τὴν παρὰ σοὶ κατάκλισιν: **οἶμαι γάρ με παρὰ σοῦ πολλῆς καὶ καλῆς σοφίας πληρωθήσεσθαι.** ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἐμὴ φαύλη τις ἂν εἴη, ἢ καὶ ἀμφισβητήσιμος ὥσπερ ὄναρ οὖσα, ἡ δὲ σὴ λαμπρά τε καὶ πολλὴν ἐπίδοσιν ἔχουσα, ἥ γε παρὰ σοῦ νέου ὄντος οὕτω σφόδρα ἐξέλαμψεν καὶ ἐκφανὴς ἐγένετο πρῴην ἐν μάρτυσι τῶν Ἑλλήνων πλέον ἢ τρισμυρίοις.". As in the *Phaedrus* passage, Socrates uses the metaphor of being filled with water to express the circumstance of acquiring knowledge. In both passages, Socrates displays a self-effacement of hyperbolic proportions. In both passages, he is negatively comparing himself with celebrated authors: in the *Symposium*, with Agathon, in the *Phaedrus*, with the authors of undetermined identity that are his "source", and, indirectly, with Lysias. Both passages present an understanding of the acquisition of knowledge where the learner is entirely passive, a pure recipient, a vessel. However, whereas the passage of the *Phaedrus* is put forward as a supposedly factual explanation of a factual state of affairs, the passage of the *Symposium* is the expression of an aspiration, perhaps even an utterly unrealistic one. These passages also differ in the "mechanisms" of transmission: in the *Symposium*, the transmission occurs through touch; in the *Phaedrus*, through the much less fantastical means of hearing. Whereas the passage of the *Phaedrus* leaves the source unnamed, in this passage of the *Symposium*, Socrates engages in a bit of flattery and indicates the prize-winning tragic writer (and fabulous host) Agathon as a source of σοφία. Both passages are comic and express absurd notions – and in both cases, neither Agathon nor Phaedrus take the notion seriously. All in all, each of these passages create the impression of being yet another instance of Socratic εἰρωνεία. The water-metaphor will be reprised later in the *Phaedrus*, in the exchange that leads to the palinode (243d4).

[141] The speeches in the *Symposium*, produced as a result of Phaedrus' challenge, are also epideictic. Each is meant to complete the previous speech or present the same subject from a different angle, like sympotic songs. The tradition of the sympotic songs (σκόλια) and speeches, associated with the practice of taking

Socrates' speech has to be better, not shorter and say different things from the ones found in the speech: τῶν ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ βελτίω τε καὶ μὴ ἐλάττω ἕτερα ὑπέσχησαι εἰπεῖν τούτων ἀπεχόμενος (235d5).

This marks the beginning of a belaboured process in which the two men negotiate the clauses of a contract, so to speak. In other words, this is the moment where the terms in which Socrates' first speech is going to be produced begin to be set. However, these terms are also the result of what we have seen so far: the give and take surrounding the assessment of Lysias' speech itself. Since what is at stake is the production of an alternative to that speech, the way in which it is assessed and understood by the two parties is essential for the determination of the conditions of production of any alternative to it.

Phaedrus' first proposal has several implications. One of these implications has to do with the scope allowed for the production of an alternative. From a denial of the possibility of there being an alternative at all, which was implied in the extraordinary claim that Lysias had left nothing out, Phaedrus now goes in the opposite direction, demanding something altogether different. Once again, this would allow for the production of a completely different kind of speech, one, for example, that denied Lysias' basic assumption. But there is yet another implication, related to the previous one, which is brought to the forefront, not without some comical effect, by Socrates' objection. The possibility of producing a speech in everything different from Lysias' implies that Lysias

what the previous singer or speaker sang or said and carry on from that. It provides at the same time, continuity and change: continuity, because it goes in a continuous flow, the next song or speech building upon the previous; change, because every new singer or speaker will add something new. The further one is down the symposiastic chain, the more difficult the task. There is, however, a substantial difference between the traditional symposiastic chain and the transmission at stake in this part of the *Phaedrus*. The traditional symposiastic chain allows a much greater margin for μεταποίησις than the one allowed by the rhetorical programme of the *Phaedrus*. The symposiastic chain allows and expects change and variation; there is no requirement to keep the same thesis. See: REITZENSTEIN, R., *Epigramm und Skolion*, Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der alexandrinischen Dichtung, Giessen, Rickersche Buchhandlung, 1893, 24ff., 84ff.; SMYTH, H. W., *Greek Melic Poets*, London, McMillan & Co., 1900, XCV-CVII; SCHMID, W., STÄHLIN, O., *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur*, Vol. 1, Die klassiche Periode der griechischen Literatur, München, Beck, 1929, reed. 1959, 442, note 2; BOWRA, C. M., *Greek Lyric Poetry*: from Alcman to Simonides, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1961, 373-397; VETTA, M. (ed.), *Poesia e simposio nella Grecia antica: guida storica e critica*, Roma/Bari, Laterza, 1983, XXXff., 128f.; LAMBIN, G., *La chanson grecque dans l'Antiquité*, Paris, C.N.R.S., 1986, 275f.; CAMPAGNER, R., In margine al Simposion di Platone, *Lexis* 11 (1993), 109-118; SEGOLONI, *Socrate a banchetto*. Il Simposio di Platone e I Banchettanti di Aristofane, Roma, GEI, 1994, 18, 137; COLESANTI, G., Il δέχεσθαι τὰ σχόλια in Aristoph. Vespae 1208-1250, *Seminari Romani di cultura greca* 2 (1999), 243-262; COLLINS, D., *Master of the Game*. Competition and Performance in Greek Poetry, Washington D.C./Cambridge (MA.), Center for Hellenic Studies/Harvard University Press, 2004; CARVALHO (2009), 35ff., especially 38 note 14.

has completely missed the mark, τοῦ παντὸς ἡμάρτηκεν (235e4-5). It is very likely that this is not what Phaedrus had in mind at all, but Socrates makes this implication explicit, just to dismiss it completely and out of hand. But the way in which he dismisses it is revealing: it is obvious that Lysias' did not miss the mark completely, since no one, not even the worse writer would miss completely. In other words, Lysias' is absolved from the imputation of having done everything wrong by the general principle that no one does everything wrong. As the saying goes, even a broken clock is right twice a day. What this comical objection does is bring to the forefront the possibility of an alternative to Lysias' speech that is in every respect different from it. The fact that this possibility is immediately dismissed does not prevent it from resonating throughout the dialogue – until the moment in which a speech with those characteristics is actually uttered. For now, however, this is a possibility that is opened and then immediately set aside for not very serious reasons.

What starts to become certain is that there is at least room for some sort of alternative to Lysias' speech. What needs to be defined is how much exactly. What this might be is textually signalled throughout this passage by the use of different phrases, some of them variations of each other. Phaedrus is the one who claims that there is no alternative[142]. It is Socrates who introduces the idea of saying something different from what Lysias has said. He does this, first, by discreetly suggesting, through preterition, that the speech failed to say τὰ δέοντα[143]; then, by showing that it lacked both formal perfection and material perfection[144]; and finally, by stating the existence of one or several alternatives, the authorship of which he attributes to others[145]. It is in this context that Socrates introduces the idea of being able to say ἕτερα on the same subject: "αἰσθάνομαι παρὰ ταῦτα ἂν ἔχειν εἰπεῖν ἕτερα μὴ χείρω" (236c5-6). Phaedrus' initial set of conditions echoes the Socratic formulation: "βελτίω τε καὶ μὴ ἐλάττω ἕτερα" (235d6-7). The word

[142] The exact formulations are the following: 234e2ff.: "οἴει ἄν τινα ἔχειν εἰπεῖν ἄλλον τῶν Ἑλλήνων **ἕτερα τούτων μείζω καὶ πλείω περὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ πράγματος**;"; 235b2ff.: "τῶν γὰρ ἐνόντων ἀξίως ῥηθῆναι **ἐν τῷ πράγματι οὐδὲν παραλέλοιπεν**, ὥστε παρὰ τὰ ἐκείνῳ εἰρημένα **μηδέν' ἄν ποτε δύνασθαι εἰπεῖν ἄλλα πλείω καὶ πλείονος ἄξια**."

[143] 234e5-6: "καὶ ταύτῃ δεῖ ὑπ' ἐμοῦ τε καὶ σοῦ τὸν λόγον ἐπαινεθῆναι, **ὡς τὰ δέοντα εἰρηκότος τοῦ ποιητοῦ**".

[144] 235a1ff.: "τῷ γὰρ ῥητορικῷ αὐτοῦ μόνῳ τὸν νοῦν προσεῖχον, **τοῦτο δὲ οὐδ' αὐτὸν ᾤμην Λυσίαν οἴεσθαι ἱκανὸν εἶναι.** καὶ οὖν μοι ἔδοξεν, ὦ Φαῖδρε, εἰ μή τι σὺ ἄλλο λέγεις, **δὶς καὶ τρὶς τὰ αὐτὰ εἰρηκέναι**, ὡς οὐ πάνυ εὐπορῶν τοῦ πολλὰ λέγειν περὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ, ἢ ἴσως οὐδὲν αὐτῷ μέλον τοῦ τοιούτου· **καὶ ἐφαίνετο δή μοι νεανιεύεσθαι ἐπιδεικνύμενος ὡς οἷός τε ὢν ταὐτὰ ἑτέρως τε καὶ ἑτέρως λέγων ἀμφοτέρως εἰπεῖν ἄριστα.**".

[145] 235b5ff.: "παλαιοὶ γὰρ καὶ σοφοὶ ἄνδρες τε καὶ γυναῖκες περὶ αὐτῶν εἰρηκότες καὶ γεγραφότες ἐξελέγξουσί με, ἐάν σοι χαριζόμενος συγχωρῶ."

"βελτίω" is repeated from 235c1[146]; the phrase used by Socrates, "μὴ χείρω", seems to be its equivalent, but in the form of a litotes. The word "βελτίω" is used by Phaedrus as short for the conditions that spell the formal and material perfection he attributes to Lysias' speech: the circumstance (deemed impossible by Phaedrus) of anyone saying "μείζω καὶ πλείω" (234e1) or, which is the same, "πλείω καὶ πλείονος ἄξια" (235b3-4). In any of these passages, what is at stake is a qualification of the alternative to Lysias' speech. It has to be an alternative that surpasses Lysias' speech both regarding its form and its content. In other words, these phrases are qualifications of ἕτερα.

It is likely that by ἕτερα Phaedrus and Socrates mean very different kinds of alternative. Let us then consider the different possibilities. One of these alternatives can be excluded immediately. This would be an alternative that only improved on Lysias' speech from a formal point of view. That there is room for improvement in this regard in Lysias' speech is made clear by Socrates' criticism of the speech's repetitiveness. But what is at stake in the alternative is more than just a rearrangement of arguments. As we have seen, by emphasizing the speech's repetitiveness, Socrates can at the same time criticize its formal shortcomings and its limitations in terms of content. Phaedrus understands this and his insistence on the speech's perfection include a reiteration of his claim that Lysias covered the most important points of the matter, and that nothing else could be added. To respect Phaedrus' initial conditions, the alternative has to surpass Lysias' speech in more than just formal perfection.

Another possible alternative relates to the main thesis of Lysias' speech, sc. "χρὴ μὴ ἐρῶντι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐρῶντι χαρίζεσθαι" (235e6ff.). To defend this thesis, Lysias' produces what can be accurately described as a ψόγος of ἔρως. A possible alternative to this would be an ἐγκώμιον of ἔρως. This would constitute an absolute alternative, a negation of the basic thesis of the speech. The already mentioned ambiguity of τὰ δέοντα opens up this possibility – and, at the same time, puts it aside, saving it for later. It is Phaedrus' understanding of τὰ δέοντα that dominates the rest of the transition between Lysias' and Socrates' first speech.

The new speech will have to defend the same thesis as Lysias' speech. It is in this context that the ambiguity of ἕτερα comes into play. If interpreted against the backdrop of the Lysias' basic thesis, ἕτερα allows a wide range of possible approaches. But Socrates

[146] "Τίνες οὗτοι; καὶ ποῦ σὺ βελτίω τούτων ἀκήκοας;"

will have none of that. He limits the scope of ἕτερα by introducing a further clause into the contract. This new clause identifies the basic assumptions of Lysias' speech, the theses upon which his main thesis is built. These assumptions or supporting theses consist in the identification between the absence of ἔρως and φρονεῖν, and the presence of ἔρως and lack of φρονεῖν[147]. This identification not only brings explicitly to the forefront something that was implicit throughout most of Lysias' speech, but it also echoes Lysias' own words, the passage of the speech where σωφροσύνη and νόσος are explicitly contrasted (231d2-3). These supporting theses are designated as ἀναγκαῖα, necessary or indispensable elements (236a1; 236a5)[148]. These become the fixed element of Socrates' speech.

This sets the program for Socrates' speech, that which will serve simultaneously as a basis and a framework. It will, in short, be the speech's ὑπόθεσις. It provides a connection between the two speeches that goes *beyond* what one would expect. What Socrates, like the next speaker or singer in a symposium, has to do is to pick up what Lysias has done and build upon it. The connection is not merely thematic (in this case, a speech about ἔρως) but also programmatic – a speech that has to defend a specific thesis about ἔρως, namely, that it is a destructive force whose presence in one's life is absolutely undesirable. Further than that, Socrates' speech will have the same ὑπόθεσις as Lysias' speech: that ἔρως is νόσος. This constitutes a set of requirements that are much narrower and at first sight easier to achieve than the ones previously set forth by Phaedrus.

However, there is still a margin of variation within this framework. Being committed to the ἀναγκαῖα of Lysias' speech does not exclude the possibility of finding new arguments to support them. What Socrates will not do is find new ἀναγαῖα apart or in addition to those already identified. This means that there will be some εὕρεσις, the coming up with new argument, in the speech, in addition to διάθεσις, the arrangement of the arguments[149]. It is still possible to introduce new arguments, as long as they do not have to do with the ἀναγκαῖα. According to the final terms of the contract, Socrates will still have to come up with more arguments (πλείω), but within the limits of ἀναγκαῖα

[147] 235e6-236a2: "τίνα οἴει λέγοντα ὡς χρὴ μὴ ἐρῶντι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐρῶντι χαρίζεσθαι, παρέντα τοῦ μὲν τὸ φρόνιμον ἐγκωμιάζειν, τοῦ δὲ τὸ ἄφρον ψέγειν, ἀναγκαῖα γοῦν ὄντα, εἶτ' ἄλλ' ἄττα ἔξειν λέγειν;"
[148] See AST, F. (ed.), *Platonis quae extant opera*, vol. X: *Adnotationes in Platonis Opera* Tomus I, Leipzig, Weidmann, 1819-1832, *ad locum*; DE VRIES, *ad locum*: "indispensable commonplaces"; YUNIS, *ad locum*.
[149] 236a3: "καὶ τῶν μὲν τοιούτων οὐ τὴν εὕρεσιν ἀλλὰ τὴν διάθεσιν ἐπαινετέον, τῶν δὲ μὴ ἀναγκαίων τε καὶ χαλεπῶν εὑρεῖν πρὸς τῇ διαθέσει καὶ τὴν εὕρεσιν." See also: HEITSCH, *op. cit.*, 82 n.112.

already identified[150]. The margin of variation will be substantially narrower than the one perhaps envisioned by Phaedrus when he first set up the terms of the contract. But it will be there nonetheless. This suggests that Socrates' task is not without its difficulties: if, on the one hand, the limitations set do not demand of him coming up with entirely new arguments, thereby making it easier; on the other hand, he has to produce something new and different within the relatively limited bounds that have been set. These conditions make Socrates' task harder and easier in different respects.

The closing of the contract, however, is not free from trepidation. Socrates resists even these apparently less onerous terms, as being beyond his abilities to fulfil[151]. He

[150] 235e6ff: "ποιήσω οὖν καὶ ἐγὼ οὕτως τὸ μὲν τὸν ἐρῶντα· τοῦ μὴ ἐρῶντος μᾶλλον νοσεῖν δώσω σοι ὑποτίθεσθαι, τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν ἕτερα πλείω καὶ πλείονος ἄξια εἰπὼν (…)".

[151] Socrates' paraphrasis of the terms in which he will have to produce his speech constitute a sort of summary of the final version of the contract: This is the final version of the contract, as paraphrased by Socrates: he is obliged to say "ἐσπούδακας, ὦ Φαῖδρε, ὅτι σου τῶν παιδικῶν ἐπελαβόμην ἐρεσχηλῶν σε, καὶ οἴει δή με ὡς ἀληθῶς ἐπιχειρήσειν εἰπεῖν παρὰ τὴν ἐκείνου σοφίαν ἕτερόν τι ποικιλώτερον;" (236b5). This is an interesting variation on Phaedrus' formulation, the significance of which deserves some consideration. In the context of this passage, one would be tempted to interpret it as synonymous to the other versions of the contract, especially the final one uttered by Phaedrus: "πλείω καὶ πλείονος ἄξια" (236b2). The word ποικίλος is often translated as "varied" or "variegated". This adjective and its correlate noun, ποικιλία, are used in a variety of contexts and applied to a wide variety of beings and situations. A piece of clothing can be described as ποικίλος, if it has many diferent colours or an intricate pattern. The same can be said of other colourful works of human craft, such as metal work, but also of colourful animals. Something can also be ποικίλος if it displays a colour that is undefined, or between two different colours – a colour that is neither X nor Y, but something in between. But this notion is not used only to describe visual characteristics. It can also be used to describe music, words and thoughts – and even the changing wind and the changing months. It can denote changeability, not only variety, sc. variety in time. And it can also denote complexity, intricacy. It has a strong "aesthetical" connotation. Something that is ποικίλος impresses, attracts, dazzles. It is beautiful because it is shiny or complex or intricate. See SCHMIDT, J. H. H., *Synonymik deer griechischen Sprache*, vol. IV, Leipzig, Teubner, 1886, 361ff.; STEINER, D., *The Crown of Song*. Metaphor in Pindar, London, Duckworth, 1986, 60; VERRALL, A. W. (ed.), *The Agamemnon of Aeschylus*, London, Macmillan, 1889, on 917; NEIL, R. A. (ed.), *The Knights of Aristophanes*, Cambridge, University Press, 1909, on 196; WERSDÖRFER, H., *Die φιλοσοφία des Isokrates im Spiegel ihrer Terminologie*. Untersuchungen zur frühattischen Rhetorik und Stillehre, Leipzig, Harrassowitz, 1940, 107f.; WACE, A. J. B., Weaving or Embroidery?, *American Journal of Archaeology* 52 (1948), 51-55; BOLLING, G. M., Ποικίλος and Θρόνα, *American Journal of Philology* 79 (1958), 275-282; TAILLARDAT, J., *Les images d'Aristophane*. Etudes de langue et de style, Paris, Belles Lettres, 1962, 232 ; van GRONINGEN, B. A. (ed.), *Theognis Le livre premier*, Amsterdam, Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1966, on 213, 222; DETIENNE, M., *Les maîtres de vérité dans la Grèce archaïque*, Paris, Maspero, 1967, 30 ; DETIENNE, M., *Les ruses de l'intelligence*. La mètis des Grecs, Paris, Flammarion, 1974, 26ff., 32, 42, 49, 63, 290, 299; MÜLLER, D., *Handwerk und Sprache*. Die sprachlichen Bilder aus dem Bereich des Handwerks in der griechischen Literatur bis 400 v. Chr., Meisenheim a. Glan, Anton Hain, 1974, 14f.; COLLARD, C. (ed.), *Euripides Supplices*, Groningen, Bouma's Boekhuis, 1975 vol. II, on 187a; FRONTISI-DUCROUX, F., *Dédale*. Mythologie de l'artisan en Grèce ancienne, Paris, Maspero, 1975, 52ff, 55, 69f. ; SVENBRO, J., *La parole et le marbre* : aux origines de la poétique grecque, Lund, Studentenlitteratur, 1976, 191ff.; FOWLER, B., The Archaic Aesthetic, *American Journal of Philology* 105 (1984), 119-49; WILLINK, C. W. (ed.), *Euripides Orestes*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1986, on 823-24; SASSI, M. M., *La scienza dell'uomo nella Grecia Antica*, Torino, Bollati Boringheri, 1988, 44; MARZULLO, B., *I sofismi di Prometeo*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1993, 223f., 430f.; VALLOZZA, M., Poikilia: storia di un termine in Isocrate, in: PRETAGOSTINI, R. (ed.), *Tradizione e innovazione nella cultura greco da Omero all'età ellenistica* : scritti in onore di Bruno Gentili, Roma, GEI, 1993, 865-876;

insists repeatedly on the contrast between Lysias' expertise, and his own amateurish lack of skill in rhetorical matters. This is actually a recurring theme in the whole transition between Lysias' speech and Socrates' first speech[152]. But after the final terms of the

MASTRONARDE, D. J., (ed.), *Euripides Phoenissae*, Cambridge, University Press, 1994, on 469-472; ROSENSTOCK, B., Athena's Cloak: Plato's Critique of the Democratic City in the Republic, *Political Theory* 22 (1994), 363-390; BARKER, A., Heterophonia and Poikilia: Accompaniments to Greek melody, in: GENTILI, B., PERUSINO, F. (eds.) *Mousike: metrica ritmica e musica greca: in memoria di Giovanni Comotti*, Pisa, Rome, Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali 1995, 41-60; DUNBAR, N., *Aristophanes Birds*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1997, on 737-9; LENS TUERO, J., «Hesychía» y «poikilía»: dos palabras de la terminología cultural griega y su proyección en las culturas modernas, in: LÓPEZ FÉREZ, A. (ed.), *La lengua científica griega: orígenes, desarrollo e influencia en las lenguas modernas europeas*. 1, Terminología cultural, tratados hipocráticos, medicina y retórica, Galeno, léxicos ideológicos tardíos, sobre el léxico científico del alemán y del griego, Madrid, Ed. Clásicas, 2000, 9-23; ROCCONI, E., Colours in Music: Metaphoric Musical Language in Greek Antiquity, in: HICKMANN, E., EICHMANN, R. (eds.) *Music-Archaeological Sources: Excavated Finds, Oral Transmission, Written Evidence* (Rahden/Westfalen), 2004, 29-34; LASCOUX, E., Plaisir et variation dans l'esthétique de la voix grecque : retour sur la « poikilia », in: LEFEBVRE, R., VILLARD, L. (ed.), *Le plaisir : réflexions antiques, approches modernes*, Mont-Saint-Aignan, Publications des Universités de Rouen et du Havre, 2006, 43-57; VILLACÈQUE, N., Histoire de la ποικιλία, un mode de reconnaissance sociale dans la démocratie athénienne, *Revue des Études Anciennes* 110 (2008), 443-459; WALLACE, R., Plato, Poikilia, and New Music in Athens, in: BERARDI, E., LISI, F., MICALELLA, D. (ed.), *Poikilia. Variazioni sul tema*, Roma, Bonnano, 2009, 201-13; VILLACÉQUE N., De la Bigarrure en Politique (Platon "République" 8.557c4-61e7), *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 130 (2010), 137-152; GRAND-CLÉMENT, A., *La Fabrique des couleurs. Histoire du paysage sensible des Grecs anciens (VIIIe-début du V e s. av. n. è.)*, Paris, Boccard, 2011, 418-488. The term ποικιλία is also used regarding different kinds of τέχνη, denoting variety, complexity, and also virtuosity. Hence the connection between this term and the epideictic genre, which thrives in virtuosistic display of skill. By saying that he will have to compose a speech that is ποικιλώτερος, Socrates is also alluding to his criticism of Lysias' repetitiveness and lack of variety (235a2) – and thereby once again showing that Lysias fails as a supposed virtuoso of rhetorical display. See ROWE, *ad locum*. It seems, however, that Socrates' rephrasing of Phaedrus' final clauses of the contract may actually add something, perhaps even another element of difficulty to his task. According to Phaedrus' formulation, Socrates only has to present more arguments, and more worthy of consideration. In other words, Socrates has to compose a speech that touches all the important aspects of the matter, thereby surpassing Lysias, who, as we have seen, is considered by Socrates to be at fault in this regard. Socrates is therefore assuming the task of producing a speech that is more varied, more complex, but also more impressive and dazzling than Lysias'. This, however, is not necessarily a clause that was subrepticiously added by Socrates' himself in his rephrasing of Phaedrus' final formulation. It might be just giving voice to what Phaedrus, in his rather subdued formulation, actually wants: a thrill to surpass the one he got from Lysias' speech and that he so enthusiastically expressed while reading the speech and immediately after (234c6ff). Note also the political, specifically democratic overtones of the term "ποικιλία", especially in *Republic* VIII. The connection between ποικιλία and the Platonic assessment of democracy might suggest that even in this passage of the *Phaedrus* this predicate could be not entirely positive. The only other instances of this term in the *Phaedrus* occur in 277c2-3: "ποικίλῃ μὲν ποικίλους ψυχῇ καὶ παναρμονίους διδοὺς λόγους". Note the use of this term to describe the ψυχή. Consider also that ποικίλος can also mean "double-dealing" or "double-speaking", which fits nicely with the status of Socrates' first speech. Cf. AST, *ad locum*; DE VRIES, *ad locum*; YUNIS, *ad locum*.

[152] The first of these moments of Socratic self-deprecation in rhetorical matters in this section of the *Phaedrus* is one that negatively compares Socrates, not to Lysias, but to Phaedrus himself: "ἡγούμενος γὰρ σὲ μᾶλλον ἢ ἐμὲ ἐπαΐειν περὶ τῶν τοιούτων σοὶ εἰπόμην" (234d4-5). The Socratic irony is pervasive throughout the rest of the passage, usually contrasting Lysias' skill with Socrates' incompetence, though the contrast is not always explicit. Instances of Socratic self-deprecation without direct comparison with Lysias: "ὅτι μὲν οὖν παρά γε ἐμαυτοῦ οὐδὲν αὐτῶν ἐννενόηκα, εὖ οἶδα, συνειδὼς ἐμαυτῷ ἀμαθίαν" (235c6f.); "ὑπὸ δὲ νωθείας αὖ καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἐπιλέλησμαι, ὅπως τε καὶ ὧντινων ἤκουσα." (235d1f.). Instances where Socrates' incompetence is compared with Lysias' skill: "εἰ γὰρ δεῖ, συγχωρητέον χάριν σήν, ἐπεὶ ἐμέ γε ἔλαθεν ὑπὸ τῆς ἐμῆς οὐδενίας· τῷ γὰρ ῥητορικῷ αὐτοῦ μόνῳ τὸν νοῦν προσεῖχον, τοῦτο δὲ οὐδ᾽ ἂν αὐτὸν ᾤμην Λυσίαν οἴεσθαι ἱκανὸν εἶναι." (234e7ff.); "φίλτατος εἶ καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς χρυσοῦς, ὦ

contract have been set, they come even more to the forefront and become elements of a comical exchange between an eager Phaedrus and a Socrates exhibiting a most likely feigned reluctance. Such is Socrates' supposed fear of appearing ridiculous if he were to try to emulate and even surpass an adept professional writer like Lysias, that he resists even threats of physical violence[153]. It is clear that these threats are no more than playful banter. Phaedrus himself understands Socrates' reluctance as feigned[154]. Phaedrus correctly recognises that Socrates is now in a position similar to Phaedrus'[155], when, at the beginning at the dialogue, he feigned reluctance at repeating Lysias' words. He throws back at him the words Socrates himself used to convince Phaedrus then (236b8ff). Only the playful oath not to repeat any more speeches to Socrates produces the desired effect. A man so addicted to speeches as Socrates would not be able to endure that (236d8ff.).

The playful exchange and Socrates feigned and exaggerated resistance have a serious purpose. Together with Socrates' several avowals of rhetorical incompetence and praises of Lysias' skill, they highlight at least one of the aspects in which Socrates is at a severe disadvantage in this rhetorical competition. But there are other ways in which Socrates starts at a disadvantage. He comes second in a competition that has some

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Φαῖδρε, εἴ με οἴει λέγειν ὡς Λυσίας τοῦ παντὸς ἡμάρτηκεν, καὶ οἷόν τε δὴ παρὰ πάντα ταῦτα ἄλλα εἰπεῖν" (235e4-5); "ἐσπούδακας, ὦ Φαῖδρε, ὅτι σου τῶν παιδικῶν ἐπελαβόμην ἐρεσχηλῶν σε, καὶ οἴει δή με ὡς ἀληθῶς ἐπιχειρήσειν εἰπεῖν παρὰ τὴν ἐκείνου σοφίαν ἕτερόν τι ποικιλώτερον;" (236b5ff.); "ἀλλ', ὦ μακάριε Φαῖδρε, γελοῖος ἔσομαι παρ' ἀγαθὸν ποιητὴν ἰδιώτης αὐτοσχεδιάζων περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν." (236d4-5). Note also the parallels with Phaedrus' own avowal of rhetorical incompetence in 228a1ff: "πῶς λέγεις, ὦ βέλτιστε Σώκρατες; οἴει με, ἃ Λυσίας ἐν πολλῷ χρόνῳ κατὰ σχολὴν συνέθηκε, δεινότατος ὢν τῶν νῦν γράφειν, ταῦτα ἰδιώτην ὄντα ἀπομνημονεύσειν ἀξίως ἐκείνου; πολλοῦ γε δέω· καίτοι ἐβουλόμην γ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἤ μοι πολὺ χρυσίον γενέσθαι.".

[153] 236c6ff.: "ἐσμὲν δὲ μόνω ἐν ἐρημίᾳ, ἰσχυρότερος δ' ἐγὼ καὶ νεώτερος, ἐκ δὲ ἁπάντων τούτων 'σύνες ὅ τοι λέγω,' καὶ μηδαμῶς πρὸς βίαν βουληθῇς μᾶλλον ἢ ἑκὼν λέγειν."

[154] 236d6: "παῦσαι πρός με καλλωπιζόμενος".

[155] 236b9: "εἰς τὰς ὁμοίας λαβάς". See THOMPSON, *ad locum*; HACKFORTH *ad locum*. This wrestling expression can be interpreted in two ways: 1) going back to the initial position, after the wrestlers have fallen; 2) inversion of the grip. In this passage, the initial positions of the interlocutors are inverted. At the beginning it was Phaedrus who was playing coy; now it is Socrates. At the beginning, it was Socrates who had to "force" the speech out of Phaedrus; not it is Phaedrus who has to "force" Socrates. Cf. *Philebus* 13a2. See also: VERRALL, A. W. (ed.), *The 'Choephori' of Aeschylus*, London, Macmillan, 1893, ad 496; BURY, R. G. (ed.), *The Philebus of Plato*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1897, ad 13d; LEEUWEN, J. van (ed.), *Aristophanis Nubes* cum prolegomenis et commentariis, Lugduni Batavorum, Sijthoff, 1898, on 551; SIDGWICK, A. (ed.), *Aeschylus Choephoroi*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1900, ad 498; ALLEN, F. F. (ed.), *Scholia Platonica*, Haverford (Pennsylvania), American Philological Association, 1938, ad Phaedr 236b, p. 76, ad *Rempublic*. 544b, 255; ADLER, A. (ed.), *Suidae lexicon*, Leipzig Teubner, 1928-1935, reed. Stuttgart, Teubner, 1967-1971, 308; TAILLARDAT, J., *Les métaphores d'Aristophane*. Études de langue et de style, Paris, Klincksieck, 1962, 336f., 353; BENKENDORFF, K. A., U*ntersuchungen zu den platonischen Gleichnissen, Vergleichen und Metaphern aus dem Bereich der Gymnastik und Agonistik*, Diss. Tübingen, 1966, 61f.; THOMPSON, G. (ed.), *The Oresteia of Aeschylus*, Amsterdam/Prague, A. H. Hakkert, Academia, 1966, ad *Choeph*. 498; GARVIE, A. F. (ed.), *Aeschylus Choephori*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1986, *ad* 497.

similarities with a symposiastic chain. This means that he will have to face some of the difficulties associated with this position. These difficulties, however, are somewhat alleviated by the terms of the contract itself, which, as we have seen, limit the scope of εὕρεσις to the elements that were not identified as ἀναγαῖα. And yet, as we have seen, this limitation is not without its difficulties, as it constrains Socrates to find an alternative within relatively confined conditions. And he also has the added difficulty of not having any time to prepare. Unlike Lysias, Socrates will have to improvise, to come up with the speech that very moment, on the spot: a task much more demanding than composing a written speech at leisure. But the constant comparison between Socrates and Lysias, to the detriment of the former, will have a poisonous effect on the latter's reputation as a skilled orator in this dialogue. Socrates' initial modesty will highlight even more the spectacular way in which he will surpass Lysias in every respect.

2.2. Two introductions: a frame story and a methodological program

Before starting with his speech, Socrates utters a prayer[156]. This has the dramatic effect of delaying the beginning of the speech, thereby creating suspense. The prayer is the first poetic moment in the dialogue. Poetry enters the scene performatively. But there is also a strong element of parody in this prayer. It is significant that at this point Socrates is still insisting on the notion that his speech will make Lysias look even better by comparison – when we will soon find out that the opposite is true. This constitutes yet another moment of exaggerated modesty, combined with extravagant praise of Lysias, which will emphasize Lysias' utter defeat in this rhetorical competition even more[157].

[156] 237a7ff.: ἄγετε δή, ὦ Μοῦσαι, εἴτε δι' ᾠδῆς εἶδος λίγειαι, εἴτε διὰ γένος μουσικὸν τὸ Λιγύων ταύτην ἔσχετ' ἐπωνυμίαν, 'ξύμ μοι λάβεσθε' τοῦ μύθου, ὅν με ἀναγκάζει ὁ βέλτιστος οὑτοσὶ λέγειν, ἵν' ὁ ἑταῖρος αὐτοῦ, καὶ πρότερον δοκῶν τούτῳ σοφὸς εἶναι, νῦν ἔτι μᾶλλον δόξῃ." See THOMPSON, *ad locum*; RITTER, *ad locum;* HACKFORTH, *op. cit.*, 37; DE VRIES, *ad locum*; ROWE, *ad locum*; SCULLY, S. (ed.), *Plato Phaedrus*, Newburyport, Ma., Focus Philosophical Library, 2003, *ad locum*; YUNIS, *ad locum*.

[157] Socrates covers his head before uttering the prayer and starting the speech: "ἐγκαλυψάμενος ἐρῶ, ἵν' ὅτι τάχιστα διαδράμω τὸν λόγον καὶ μὴ βλέπων πρὸς σὲ ὑπ' αἰσχύνης διαπορῶμαι." (237a4-5). This could have several meanings. He states that he does it because he is ashamed. But what is he ashamed of? It has been suggested that he is ashamed of the speech he is about to utter because of its basic thesis. This would turn this particular passage into a moment of foreshadowing of Socrates' overt opposition to the perspective on ἔρως of which Lysias is the spokesperson. Another possibility, however, is that this is another display of excessive modesty and indirect extravagant praise of Lysias' skill. Socrates covers his head because he is ashamed of being compared with someone as adept as Lysias. See: DE VRIES, *ad locum*; ROWE, *ad locum*; YUNIS, *ad locum*; SALA, *op. cit.*, 99-100.

In contrast with Lysias' speech, which goes directly into the subject matter as something previously discussed, Socrates' speech begins with a little frame story. Socrates' speech is, in fact, just part of a tale, and one should be at all times aware of the significance of this[158]. The tale is about an ἐραστής that pretends not to be in love with a boy[159]. He uses this pretence to write a speech to persuade the boy that he should rather gratify someone who is not in love than someone who is. He is a αἰμύλος, someone who presents himself as someone he is not. This creates a fiction within the original fiction. Socrates says: imagine a man who is in love with a boy; but imagine as well that he pretends he is not in love with that boy[160]. As a result of this frame story, Socrates' αἰμύλος is a much more complex character than Lysias' non-lover. He is a liar and the audience of the speech knows that outright. He is pretending to be something he is not. Being a lover pretending to be a non-lover, he has a clear agenda, without the ambiguities that characterised Lysias' non-lover: he wants the boy because he is in love with him. By introducing a character like the αἰμύλος as the fictional speaker of his speech, Socrates is emphasizing the potential difference between the face value and the real value of the content of the speech. The speech against ἔρως can be produced by an ἐραστής, which means that it can be produced from the point of view that it intends to denounce.

The fact that he pretends to be a non-lover is significant in as far as it adds weight to his argument. As a lover, he will, according to the assumptions inherited from Lysias, be μαινόμενος. When he pretends to be a non-lover, he is claiming for himself a φρονεῖν he is not clearly in possession of. This lover pretending to be a non-lover is therefore untrustworthy on two accounts: because he is a lover and therefore μαινόμενος, and because he is a liar. The fact that this lover, this person supposedly in the grips of a form

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[158] See CALVO, T., Socrates first speech in the Phaedrus and Plato's criticism of rhetoric, in ROSSETI, L. (ed.) *Understanding the Phaedrus – Proceedings of the II. Symposium Platonicum*, Sankt Augustin, Academia Verlag, 1992, 47-60.

[159] It is not clear what the specification "μᾶλλον δὲ μειρακίσκος" (237b2) adds to the meaning of παῖς in this context. DE VRIES, *ad locum*, states that μειρακίσκος means someone older than a παῖς, but that is not very helpful, seeing that we do not really know what age παῖς is supposed to denote in this passage. See SALA, 113, *ad locum*. Both παῖς and μειρακίσκος are particularly difficult to understand. On the age system in ancient Greek culture, see DAVIDSON, *op. cit.*, 68ff., especially 78-80. According to Davidson, words like μειράκιον and μειρακίσκος would denote a young man who was at least 18 years old. See also HINDLEY, Law, Society and Homosexuality in Ancient Athens, *Past & Present* 133 (1991), 167-183, especially 178 n. 50. Even παῖς, being such a vague word, could sometimes refer to a young man, as opposed to a child or an adolescent boy. Modern languages also suffer from this ambiguity, e.g., the Portuguese word "rapaz" can be used to refer to a small male child or to a young man, or even, in particular if used by an elderly person, to a man as old as forty. For this reason, I will use the word "boy" in a very wide sense.

[160] 237b3ff.: "εἷς δέ τις αὐτῶν αἰμύλος ἦν, ὃς οὐδενὸς ἧττον ἐρῶν ἐπεπείκει τὸν παῖδα ὡς οὐκ ἐρῴη. καί ποτε αὐτὸν αἰτῶν ἔπειθεν τοῦτ᾽ αὐτό, ὡς μὴ ἐρῶντι πρὸ τοῦ ἐρῶντος δέοι χαρίζεσθαι, ἔλεγέν τε ὧδε".

of μανία, is capable of such a devious plan already introduces a degree of novelty regarding the portrayal of the lover by Lysias. This is not Lysias' bumbling fool. This is a devious, deceitful and calculating man that acts in a rational way to fulfil his desires. This alone already suggests a significant shift in the understanding of μανία and φρονεῖν. If the ἔρως that affects the pretended non-lover is a form of μανία, then we are dealing with a μανία that does not disturb the practical aspects of φρονεῖν, that does not prevent one from successfully achieving what one wants. This is a μαινόμενος that shares plenty of the attributes of a φρόνιμος, at least as φρονεῖν is conceived in Lysias' speech. This will be a μαινόμενος that is capable of recognizing the appeal of φρονεῖν in the context of a pederastic relationship, and, most of all, the bad reputation that results from being known as someone under the effect of ἔρως. This is a μαινόμενος that recognises the advantages of, so to speak, staying in the closet, not only for his reputation within the community, but also for the opinion his beloved may have of him. By attributing such a clever, coherent and rational speech to a μαινόμενος, Socrates is performatively denying the speech's face value: a μαινόμενος can behave rationally, after all.

The speech against μανία is used as an instrument in a μανικός project. The αἰμύλος is using the rational argumentation against ἔρως to achieve his own erotic aims. Like in Lysias' speech, the boy is supposed to have a perspective not affected by ἔρως. In this, as we have seen, the boy is radically different from the ἐραστής, and very similar to the non-lover, or, in the case of Socrates' first speech, with the self-presentation of the pretended non-lover. It is this supposedly shared perspective that the pretended non-lover appeals to; it is this perspective that serves as the basis upon which he builds his arguments. This pretended non-lover is setting up a trap for the boy – using φρονεῖν as bait[161]. In this I entirely disagree with Hackforth, who says: "The whole attitude of the speaker, unlike Lysias' speaker, shows a *real* (my emphasis) concern for the welfare, especially the moral welfare, of the boy, a concern that would have been unconvincing to attribute to a genuine cold-blooded sensualist"[162]. The αἰμύλος' strategy, like Lysias' non-

[161] On the possible pun αἴμων-αἰμύλος, see BROWN, M., COULTER, J., The Middle Speech of Plato's *Phaedrus*, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 9 (1971), 405-423, especially 422 n33.
[162] HACKFORTH, *op. cit.*, 40. See also NUSSBAUM's ('This Story isn't true': madness, reason, and recantation in the *Phaedrus*, in: NUSSBAUM, M., *The Fragility of Goodness*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986, 200-233) even more benevolent reading of Socrates' first speech: "Here we have a lover who tells us, apparently seriously, that ἔρως is a madness and a disease: anyone for whom he cares should avoid its grip and seek to live in reason with reasonable people" (203). According to Nussbaum's reading the αἰμύλος is addressing the boy not to woo him, but rather to warn him against ἔρως. This view, however, does not explain why the speaker pretends not to be in love.

lover, relies in passing himself off as someone highly concerned with the boy's welfare as a means to achieve his main goal: sexual gratification. The fact that he pretends not to be a lover only emphasises this. In a context where παιδεραστία is to be rejected as potentially harmful to the boy, a *real*, as opposed to a *feigned*, concern would entail warning him against yielding to any suitor, especially those with a hidden agenda. By putting the ψόγος of ἔρως in the mouth of a liar who is himself in love, Socrates is actually producing a *double* ψόγος of ἔρως: one, the actual content of the speech attributed to the αἰμύλος; the other, in the form of a story where a lover uses lies and deceit to seduce and manipulate an innocent young boy.

Of course, the fact that the speaker is presented as a deceiver makes one doubt the accuracy and *bona fides* of the contents of the speech itself, since it is being used as an instrument of deception. He is also, on top of that, a μαινόμενος (at least according to the understading of μανία we find in Lysias' speech) and his lack of φρονεῖν puts a considerable dent in his credibility. To have a μαινόμενος berate ἔρως as a form of μανία, and the absence of ἔρως as a form of φρονεῖν presents a serious challenge to the status of the speech[163]. This, however, does not necessarily affect the contents of the speech itself, and the speech should not be dismissed out of hand just because the αἰμύλος is both a deceiver and a μαινόμενος. It might so happen that he is saying something meaningful and truthful about the phenomena he is discussing – and this can only be revealed if the speech is left to stand or fall in its own merits.

The fact that the speaker is a μαινόμενος has interesting consequences when seen in connection with the distinctive Platonic flavour of the speech. All in all, the speech mentions and makes use of elements that are used repeatedly and extensively throughout the *corpus platonicum*. The recurring theme of the opposition between τι and ποῖον τι figures prominently in the "methodological introduction" of Socrates' first speech[164]. And

[163] This also adds to the difficulty of the speech as an epideictic challenge – and, by the same token, to Socrates' achievement, if he happens to be able to pull it off. To use the official discourse of φρονεῖν in the service of the purposes of a μαινόμενος, and to do so efficiently and brilliantly is a feat that surpasses Lysias by quite a lot. In this sense, Socrates' first speech will be ποικιλώτερος: a greater display of virtuosistic abilities.

[164] 237c2: "τοὺς δὲ πολλοὺς λέληθεν ὅτι οὐκ ἴσασι τὴν οὐσίαν ἑκάστου."; 237c5: "ἀλλ᾽ ἐπειδὴ σοὶ καὶ ἐμοὶ ὁ λόγος πρόκειται πότερα ἐρῶντι ἢ μὴ μᾶλλον εἰς φιλίαν ἰτέον, περὶ ἔρωτος οἷόν τ᾽ ἔστι καὶ ἣν ἔχει δύναμιν".

the same can be said about οἴεσθαι εἰδέναι[165], the notion of ὁμολογία[166] and the opposition, used throughout the speech, between a "rational" principle and the forces that oppose it. What we find in this speech is a μαινόμενος and a liar that speaks using Platonic notions. It is like Plato is making a pastiche of his own philosophical writing – but attributing it to someone who lacks both φρονεῖν and honesty, and uses it as an instrument in his own erotic project. By doing this, he warns us of the possibility of his own philosophical input being used against its real value; in other words, of the possibility that philosophical language can be used to deceive and to further a project characterised by μανία, rather than at the service of understanding reality and uncovering the truth.

The narrative introduction is followed by a "methodological introduction". In it the speaker presents the method he is going to use to define and characterise ἔρως. The αἰμύλος and the boy have a problem on their hands, something they need to discuss. The boy has to make a choice: he has several ἐρασταί, several admirers or suitors, and has to choose among them, or, if he so decides, to choose none of them. He needs to make a choice. As with any choice, it should not be made blindly (237b7ff.). This passage has a rather Platonic flavour: it insists very forcefully in the crucial role of knowledge in one's life. Most people, he says, do not understand what they are deliberating about; they are bound to be completely wrong. They choose blindly, ignorantly, without sufficient knowledge of either the options or the situation they are in. But this is no simple ignorance; it is what we would call a double ignorance: not only do they ignore the matter of the deliberation, but they also are not aware that they ignore that. They do not know that they do not know. To avoid this, the boy must have an accurate knowledge of what he is deliberating about before he can decide in any way.

This marks a significant difference from Lysias' speech. Lysias does not bother to define or in any way explain what ἔρως is. He just uses everyday conceptions and beliefs about it. While Lysias rhetorical strategy skips over any attempt of voicing an explicit understanding of ἔρως in order to concentrate on its ψόγος, Socrates is subtler: he will produce a definition of ἔρως, or, to be more accurate, he will show what ἔρως is and what

[165] 237c1ff.: "εἰδέναι δεῖ περὶ οὗ ἂν ᾖ ἡ βουλή, ἢ παντὸς ἁμαρτάνειν ἀνάγκη. τοὺς δὲ πολλοὺς λέληθεν ὅτι οὐκ ἴσασι τὴν οὐσίαν ἑκάστου. ὡς οὖν εἰδότες οὐ διομολογοῦνται ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς σκέψεως, προελθόντες δὲ τὸ εἰκὸς ἀποδιδόασιν· οὔτε γὰρ ἑαυτοῖς οὔτε ἀλλήλοις ὁμολογοῦσιν."

[166] 237c2: "ὡς οὖν εἰδότες οὐ διομολογοῦνται ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς σκέψεως, προελθόντες δὲ τὸ εἰκὸς ἀποδιδόασιν: οὔτε γὰρ ἑαυτοῖς οὔτε ἀλλήλοις ὁμολογοῦσιν."; 237c5ff.: ἀλλ᾽ ἐπειδὴ σοὶ καὶ ἐμοὶ ὁ λόγος πρόκειται πότερα ἐρῶντι ἢ μὴ μᾶλλον εἰς φιλίαν ἰτέον, περὶ ἔρωτος οἷόν τ᾽ ἔστι καὶ ἣν ἔχει δύναμιν, ὁμολογίᾳ θέμενοι ὅρον, εἰς τοῦτο ἀποβλέποντες καὶ ἀναφέροντες τὴν σκέψιν ποιώμεθα εἴτε ὠφελίαν εἴτε βλάβην παρέχει.".

power it has – οἷόν τ᾽ ἔστι καὶ ἣν ἔχει δύναμιν (237d1). Lysias used the traditional τόποι of παιδεραστία and ἔρως and manipulated them in such a way as to support his outlandish thesis. Socrates, on the other hand, will use those same τόποι, but in a subtler way. The thesis will be explicitly supported by a specific understanding of what ἔρως is. This definition will be seen as an accurate statement of the nature of the phenomenon. It is on the basis of the understanding of what ἔρως is that the effects of ἔρως will be understood. The need for coming to a settled and explicit understanding of what ἔρως is arises from the fact that the speaker of Socrates first speech acknowledges that ἔρως is a subject concerning which the ideas of the many are confused and wrong. By recognising the confusing nature of the term ἔρως, the speaker presents himself as someone that, unlike Lysias' non-lover, will not take advantage of the equivocal nature of the concept. The speaker will rather establish a definition in order to proceed with his exposition of the advantages and inconveniences of ἔρως.

This is a rhetorical strategy that works through stages. In the first stage, the definition of the subject matter will ostensibly create a solid ground on which to build the main arguments of the speech. From this definition, or, to be more accurate, from the perspective on the subject matter that is expressed through the definition, the speaker can produce a diagnosis regarding the character of the subject matter itself. Lysias jumps directly to this latter stage, since his speech is, from the start, an interwoven tissue of ψόγος and ἐγκώμιον. But in the first speech of Socrates, the discussion regarding the benefits and disadvantages of ἔρως will have to wait until a definite understanding of ἔρως itself is deemed to have been sufficiently established.

The problem with the αἰμύλος' strategy is that the definition that is aimed at does not require anything but agreement between those who are discussing the matter[167]. It is not a definition that aims at uncovering the truth of the matter, but rather a definition that aims at establishing a solid starting-point for a deliberation, a starting-point based solely on the agreed upon opinions of the ones debating. In other words, the definition the αἰμύλος is trying to establish will be based in commonly accepted beliefs. Now, we have already seen that Lysias does something similar. He uses commonly held beliefs as the basis for his statements about the lover and the non-lover. The main difference between

[167] GRISWOLD (*op. cit.*, 60) observes: "We can mutually agree upon false premises and construct through valid reasoning perfectly coherent definitions". See also SINAIKO, *op. cit.*, 32-33.

his procedure and the αἰμύλος' strategy is that one makes explicit what the other one did only implicitly. Socrates' αἰμύλος openly states his "method" and goes about finding commonly held beliefs regarding the nature of ἔρως. He does not proceed by analysing ἔρως as a phenomenon. He merely repeats (and elaborates on) theses that were already socially approved and widely held. These are not object of any examination regarding their truth or foundation. They are just accepted without question. But this problem is compounded by the fact that there is some sort of attempt at a definition, or, to be more precise, by the fact that there is a perspective on ἔρως that is explicitly voiced and articulated. It gives the appearance that one actually knows what one is talking about, when it might be very well the case that one does not. The mutual agreement may not necessarily correspond to an actual understanding of what is at stake in the phenomenon being analysed – but the fact that it comes about as a result of what appears to be a analysis of what is at stake in the common understanding of ἔρως gives the impression that one actually knows what one is on about. In other words, the αἰμύλος' definition wears the trappings of an understanding of ἔρως, but might be anything but. It might be very well be a perspective that, not unlike the αἰμύλος himself, is passed off as something that it is not.

2.3. The anthropological model

The difficulties that the method chosen by the αἰμύλος entails are clear from the very start. "It is evident for everyone", he says, "that ἔρως is a kind of desire"[168]. This sentence does not seem to offer any great difficulty. The speaker takes as his starting point commonly held beliefs, considered to be evident, in no need of justification. But the next sentence is more problematic: "ὅτι δ' αὖ καὶ μὴ ἐρῶντες ἐπιθυμοῦσι τῶν καλῶν, ἴσμεν" (237d4-5). The problem is how to understand and translate τῶν καλῶν, since it can be a genitive masculine, feminine or neutral. Judging by the pederastic context, one can surely eliminate the feminine hypothesis[169]. Usually, critics translate this phrase as a neutral with

[168] 237d4: "ὅτι μὲν οὖν δὴ ἐπιθυμία τις ὁ ἔρως, ἅπαντι δῆλον"

[169] This is due *only* to the pederastic context. The assumptions regarding the intrinsic inferiority of the female sex and the specific role they had to play in Ancient Greek, and especially Athenian, society would not make them eligible targets for this kind of erotic attachment. The idea is that one has desire for the best; women not being the best, were therefore not considered worthy objects of desire. See, e.g., the formulation of this idea in Pausanias' speech, *Symposium* 181c2ff.: ὁ δὲ τῆς Οὐρανίας πρῶτον μὲν οὐ μετεχούσης θήλεος ἀλλ' ἄρρενος μόνον—καὶ ἔστιν οὗτος ὁ τῶν παίδων ἔρως—ἔπειτα πρεσβυτέρας, ὕβρεως ἀμοίρου· ὅθεν δὴ ἐπὶ τὸ ἄρρεν τρέπονται οἱ ἐκ τούτου τοῦ ἔρωτος ἔπιπνοι, τὸ φύσει ἐρρωμενέστερον καὶ νοῦν

something in the lines of "the beautiful"[170]. This has the not negligible advantage of covering all our possibilities. "The beautiful" is vague enough to suggest both "beautiful [boys]" and "the beautiful" *latissimo sensu*, τὰ καλά. The ambiguity seems to be deliberate. Ἐπιθυμία in general has as its object τὰ καλά. By τὰ καλά, however, something more than "beautiful things" is meant. It includes the whole spectrum of aims that are superlatively suited to be the objects of desire. These include not only those things that one might acquire or possess, like wealth, but also those things that one might do, like noble feats. When confronted with the phrase "the beautiful", any Plato reader will most likely think of everything but beautiful boys – they will think about the Forms, justice, laws, etc[171]. The loftier possible meaning of "the beautiful" comes immediately to the forefront, at the expense of the more mundane one. In this context, however, and without losing sight of the more general meaning, one could interpret τῶν καλῶν in a narrower sense, as masculine. In this case, what would be at stake is an ἐπιθυμία for beautiful boys. This corresponds to a specific kind of καλά, the specific kind that corresponds to the ἐπιθυμία τις common to ἐραστής and non-lover alike[172].

However, to interpret this passage taking simply into account this more general possible meaning of τῶν καλῶν has significant consequences. It creates a distinction between those who are in love and those who are not that misses the point of the argument. This translation strongly suggests that the distinction between the ἐραστής and the non-lover resides in the fact that only the former has an ἐπιθυμία for beautiful boys. Those who are in love desire beautiful boys; those who are not desire other beautiful things.

μᾶλλον ἔχον ἀγαπῶντες". There is, however, nothing intrinsically incompatible between the statements regarding the nature and effects of ἔρως in this speech and women being either the objects of erotic desire or the ones who are affected by it. This is merely a culturally specific quirk, from a particularly "misogynistic society". Apart from these culturally specific preconceptions, there is nothing in the anthropological model and in the definition of ἔρως in this speech that might exclude women from being the objects of erotic desire.

[170] See, for example, Hackforth ("that which is fair"), Rowe ("the beautiful), Robin ("ce qui est bon"), Heitsch ("was schön ist"), Mouze ("les belles choses"). See ROWE, *ad locum*. What is at stake in this passage is an attempt to define ἔρως by determining its *genus proximum* and *differentia specifica*. The ambiguity resides in the exact delimitation of the *differentia*: either in relation to ἐπιθυμία in general, or in relation to a particular form of ἐπιθυμία towards a specific kind of object, namely towards the beautiful members of the male sex.

[171] This tendency is even worse in languages such as Portuguese, where adjectives (and therefore adjectives used as substantives) vary according to gender and number. The traditional translation for this phrase, "o belo", has the disadvantage of being singular and, therefore, of suggesting something altogether abstract. It is as if we were to translate this passage as "that which is beautiful" – with all the abstract "Platonic" overtones it carries.

[172] What is at stake in this passage is an attempt to define ἔρως by determining its *genus proximum* and *differentia specifica*. The ambiguity resides in the exact delimitation of the *differentia*

This, in this context, is absurd. We have already seen that Lysias non-lover is only a non-lover as far as "lover" is understood as someone who is in love. Both ἐραστής and non-lover share the same goal: the χαρίζεσθαι. Being a non-lover does not mean one does not want the boy – it would be absurd to try to woo him, if that were the case. It rather means one wants the boy without being in love. Likewise, in Socrates' first speech, the αἰμύλος is not pretending that he does not desire the boy sexually. He just pretends he is not in love with him. If the distinction between lover and non-lover could be established by a difference in object, the anthropological model and the complicated explanation needed to achieve a definition of ἔρως would all be unnecessary. This is confirmed by the next sentence, where the αἰμύλος asks in what way one will distinguish between those in love and those who are not[173]. This strongly suggests the distinction is not as simple as stating that the non-lover desires beautiful things other than beautiful boys, while the lover desires beautiful boys most of all. Both the lover and the non-lover desire boys. It is this fact that makes a distinction necessary.

This is a subtle distinction, so subtle that it demands an account of what happens "ἡμῶν ἐν ἑκάστῳ" (237d6). This account, however brief, is very complex, ambiguous, and requires a lengthy and difficult analysis. It is, in fact, its brevity, its succinctness that makes an extended analysis necessary. The speaker assumes a lot, leaves a lot unsaid and makes use of the ambiguity of this characterisation for his own rhetorical purposes. What is striking in this characterisation of human nature is how vague it is. The elements that constitute human nature are at no point defined, seemingly because they are obvious. This contrasts starkly with the methodological programme set up at the beginning of the speech: so soon after insisting on the need to understand what one is talking about, the αἰμύλος resorts to seemingly obvious vague terms to make his case[174].

The first thing one should notice when reading this passage (237d6ff.) is that human beings are not presented as unitary beings, but rather as intrinsically complex. Even though Socrates does not mention this specifically, it is clear that this complexity has to do specifically with the multiplicity of possible courses of action, behaviours,

[173] 237d5: "τῷ δὴ τὸν ἐρῶντά τε καὶ μὴ κρινοῦμεν;"
[174] GRISWOLD (*op. cit.*, 62) notes that the anthropological model is based on "a sort of elementary self-knowledge", and remarks that it "articulates, in pseudotechnical language, a quite ordinary and common understanding of inner moral conflict". See also STALLBAUM, G. (ed.), *Platonis Opera Omnia*, vol. 4. sect. 1: *Phaedrus*, Gotha, Erfurt, Hennings, 1867, *ad* 237d: "In describendis animi facultatibus Socrates hic sequitur opinionem popularem, ut Legg. I. 642"; DE VRIES, ad 237e2-3. HACKFORTH (41-42) shares the same view and remarks on the "Platonic overtones" of the language used. See also SALA, 104-105.

choices, life paths, aims, goals and objectives that constitute human life. This is what seems to be at stake in this passage, and it is this phenomenon that the αἰμύλος is proposing an explanation for. At first glance, human life is a confusing swarm of paths, determined by a no less confusing variety of peculiar circumstances, causes, influences and conditions. It might not appear as entirely chaotic, since one is able to recognise, at least to a certain extent, chains of cause and effect that determine some of what happens. But it appears, nonetheless, that at most one is capable of a limited understanding of specific set of circumstances and actions, not, so to speak, the whole picture. What the αἰμύλος puts forward, though, is precisely an overall understanding of this phenomenon. This confusing multiplicity is the result of the regency of the two ἰδέα, as well as the interaction between them[175]. One can now understand the bewildering swarm of human actions, behaviours and aims by using a specific and limited number of categories – categories that explain all possible human actions and behaviours, in all possible cases.

As far as we can understand, the αἰμύλος is applying what might be called an alphabetical model. With the alphabet, the undetermined multiplicity of sounds used in human verbal communication are reduced to a series of combinations of a relatively limited number of basic elements. These elements, the letters, are identifiable and intelligible determinations. The alphabetical model is characteristic of τέχναι such as medicine. For those who have medical knowledge, the multiplicity of states, activities, operations, ailments and dysfunctions the human body is the seat of become intelligible

[175] It is very difficult to translate ἰδέα. Hackforth suggests "principles", and I would agree with him, seeing that that is the role they play in this anthropological model. See also SALA, 104, who translates ἰδέα as "principio". Others, such as DE VRIES (ad 237d6), HEITSCH and ROWE, suggest less technical translations, such as "things" or "kinds of things". I am inclined towards a "more technical" meaning. One should bear in mind how, as A. E. Taylor pointed out, terms such as ἰδέα and εἶδος were used frequently used by the different kinds of Ancient Greek τέχνη as technical terms, namely in geometry, medicine, rhetoric and logic to designate the fundamental elements of building blocks of the particular perspectives of these disciplines. See TAYLOR, A. E., *Varia Socratica*. First Series, Oxford, J. Parker, 1911, 178ff. I believe that this passage pretends to be, in the economy of this specific speech, highly technical. The αἰμύλος wants to impress the boy with his "scientific" knowledge and uses this kind of vocabulary for that specific purpose. He delineates a general theory about ἔρως to support his claims. This general theory demands a pseudotechnical vocabulary, which gives an aura of scholarly credibility to his assertions. Cf. DE VRIES, ad 237e2-3, who mentions that the antithesis between δόξα and ἐπιθυμία is "a popular antithesis, not a philosophical one". That may be so, but as HACKFORTH (42), together with De Vries himself and FRIEDLÄNDER (*Platon* III, 467, n 12) point out, one cannot read this passage without hearing "Platonic overtones" – and noticing the conspicuous absence of ἐπιστήμη, which we would perhaps expect to be the "Platonic" opposite of ἐπιθυμία as an existential principle. And so there is a double tension in the whole passage where the definition of ἔρως is explained: on the one hand, between the "popular" conceptions and the "pseudo-technical" tone and vocabulary; on the other hand, and between these and the "Platonic overtones" that are "inevitably" heard. The main disagreement resides in how the reader should deal with this double tension: either one follows HACKFORTH's advice and try to ignore the "Platonic overtones", or one sees them as purposeful and meaningful, as FRIEDLÄNDER seems to suggest.

as the result of the interaction of a limited number of identifiable elements. Where laymen can only see confusion, those who are in possession of "technical" knowledge can distinguish recognisable determinations. But the medical model is not the only one at stake in this passage: there is also a political model[176].

[176] One should note that this "technical", quasi-medical model, however, is teeming with political terminology: ἄρχειν and cognates (237d6, twice in 238a2), κρατεῖν and cognates (237e2, twice in 238a1, 238a6), τυραννεῖν (238b1), δυναστεύειν (238b4). Of particular importance is the use of the political concepts of ὁμόνοια (237e1) and στάσις (*ibidem*), along with the notions of σωφροσύνη (238a1) and ὕβρις (238a2, 238a3) as fundamental notions in this model. What we are dealing with can be understood as either a quasi-medical model that makes use of political terms, or a political understanding of what is at stake in human life explained by a quasi-medical model. On the tradition of the use of political or social notions or "models" by medicine, and of the use by political discourse of medical notions or "models", see, e.g.: COCHRANE, C. N., *Thucydides and the Science of History*, London, Milford, 1929, 133f.; JAEGER, W., *Paideia*. Die Formung des griechischen Menschen, Berlin, de Gruyter, 1933, reed. 1973, 193f. (I, 193f.), 530ff. (II, 14f.); STELLA, L. A., Importanza di Alcmeone nella storia del pensiero greco, *Memorie della Reale Accademia Nazionnale dei Lincei*, s. 6, 8 (1939), 233–87; EHRENBERG, V., Isonomia, in: PAULY, A., WISSOWA, G. (ed.), *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Supplbd. VII, Stuttgart, Metzler, 1940, col. 293-301; THOMSON, G., *Aeschylus and Athens*. A Study in the Social Origins of Drama, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1941, reed. N. Y., Grosset & Dunlap, 1968, 196, 202; TEMKIN, O., Metaphors of Human Biology, in: R. C. STAUFFER (ed.): *Science and Civilization*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1949, 169-194, especially 170, (=IDEM, *The Double Face of Janus* and Other Essays in the History of Medicine, Baltimore/London, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977, 271-283, especially 272f.); GROßMANN, G., *Politische Schlagwörter aus der Zeit des Peloponnesischen Krieges*, Zürich, Leemann, 1950, 43ff., especially 53ff.; FOWLER, B.H., The Imagery of the Prometheus Bound, *The American Journal of Philology* 78 (1952), 173-184, especially 176f.; VLASTOS, G., Isonomia, *The American Journal of Philology* 74 (1953), 337-366, especially 363f.; BAMBROUGH, R., Plato's Political Analogies, in: LASLETT, P. (ed.), *Philosophy, Politics, and Society*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1956, 98-115; VLASTOS, G., Ἰσονομία πολιτική, in: MAU, J., SCHMIDT, E. G. et al. (ed.), *Isonomia*. Studien zur Gleichheitsvorstellung im griechischen Denken, Berlin, Akademie-Verlag, 1964, 1-35; MACKINNEY, L. C., The Concept of Isonomia in Greek Medicine, *ibi*, 79-88; KUDLIEN, F., *Der Beginn des medizinischen Denkens bei den Griechen.* Von Homer bis Hippocrates, Zürich/Stuttgart, Artemis, 1967, 51f., 60ff., 128f.; LLOYD, G. E. R., The Role of Medical and Biological Analogies in Aristotle's Ethics, *Phronesis* 13 (1968), 68-83; ROMILLY, J. de, Alcibiade et le mélange entre jeunes et vieux; politique et médecine, *Wiener Studien* 10 (1976), 93-105 (=EADEM, *L'invention de l'histoire politique chez Thucydide*, Paris, Éditions rue d'Ulm, 2005, 147-156); JOUANNA, J., Le médecin modèle du législateur dans les Lois de Platon, *Ktèma* 3 (1978), 77-91; LANZA, D., *Lingua e discorso nell'Atene delle professioni*, Napoli, Liguori, 1979, 122ff.; JOUANNA, J., Politique et médecine. La problématique du changement dans le Régime des maladies aiguës et chez Thucydide (livre VI), in: GRMEK, M. (ed.), *Hippocratica*, Actes du Colloque hippocratique de Paris, 4-9 septembre 1978, Paris, C.N.R.S., 1980, 298-319 (=IDEM, Politics and Medicine. The Problem of Change in Regimen in Acute Diseases and Thucydides (Book 6), in: IDEM, *Greek Medicine from Hippocrates to Galen*. Selected Papers, Leiden, Brill, 2012, 21-38); STALLEY, R., Mental Health and Individual Responsibility in Plato's Republic, *Journal of Value Inquiry* 15 (1981), 109-124; CAMBIANO, G., Patologia e metafora politica. Alcmeone, Platone, Corpus Hippocraticum, *Elenchos* 3 (1982), 219-236; CAMPBELL, B., Poliatrics: Physicians and the Physician Analogy within Fourth-century Analysis, *The American Political Science Review* 76 (1982), 810-824; CAMBIANO, G., Pathologie et analogie politique, in: LASSERRE, F., MUDRY, P. (ed.), *Formes de pensée dans la Collection hippocratique*. Actes du IVe Colloque International Hippocratique (Lausanne, 21-26 septembre 1981), Genève, Droz, 1983, 441-458; BLICKMANN, D. R., *The Theme of Health and Disease in Early Greek Ethics*, Diss. Stanford, 1983; VEGETTI, M., Metafora politica e immagine del corpo negli scritti ippocratici, *Klio* 66 (1984), 459-469 (=IDEM, *Tra Edipo e Euclide*, forme del sapere antico, Milano, Il Saggiatore, 1983, 41-58); TRIEBEL-SCHUBERT, C., Der Begriff des Heilmittels in der antiken Staatstheorie: Bemerkungen zu Aristoteles Politik 1267b ff., in: HAU, F. R., KEIL, G., SCHUBERT, C. (ed.), *Istorgia dalla Madaschegna*. Festschrift für Nikolaus Mani, Pattensen/Han., Wellm, 1985, 45-54; RUTTENBERG, H. S., Plato's Use of the Analogy between Justice and Health, *Journal of*

The principles identified by the αἰμύλος seem to correspond to the traditional understanding of human behaviour as dominated by two opposing sources of vital orientation: desires and the "rational" principle that controls or tries to control them. What is presented in this passage is somewhat similar to the traditional understanding of "mental conflicts" as analogous with the conflicts that arise within the πόλις: as conflicts between parties with opposing goals, both vying for dominance. The determinations identified in this speech, the "ἰδέα ἄρχοντε καὶ ἄγοντε", take the role of these opposing parties. Socrates identifies these ἰδέα as "ἔμφυτος οὖσα ἐπιθυμία ἡδονῶν" and "ἐπίκτητος δόξα, ἐφιεμένη τοῦ ἀρίστου". Both ἰδέα have in common the fact that they are posited as general principles that guide human behaviour. As we shall see in greater detail, what is at stake in this description is the balance of forces between these two principles, and, to be more precise, the possibility of one acquiring a dominant position over the other. When ἐπιθυμία is the determining principle, the situation described as ὕβρις occurs. When δόξα has the upper hand, σωφροσύνη occurs. The interaction between these two principles is

Value Inquiry 20 (1986), 145-156; WÖHRLE, G., *Studien zur Theorie der antiken Gesundheitslehre*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner, 1990, 51ff., 140ff.; LÓPEZ SALVÁ, M., Medicina y pensamiento en el Corpus Hippocraticum, *Myrtia* 6 (1991), 27-48; RECHENAUER, G., *Thukydides und die hippokratische Medizin*, Hildesheim, Olms, 1991, especially 251ff., 274ff., 284ff., 312ff., 336ff., 361ff.; SANCHO ROCHER, L., Στάσις y κρᾶσις en Tucídides (8.97.1-2), *Habis* 25 (1994), 41-69; SWAIN, S., Man and Medicine in Thucydides, *Arethusa* 27 (1994), 303-327; LIDZ, J. W., Medicine as Metaphor in Plato, *Journal of Medical Philosophy* 20 (1995), 527-541; SCHUBERT, C., Menschenbild und Normwandel in der klassischen Zeit, in: FLASHAR, H., JOUANNA, J. (ed.), *Médecine et morale dans l'Antiquité*: dix exposés suivis de discussions, Genève-Vandœuvres, Fondation Hardt, 1997, 121-155; LORAUX, N., Un absent de l'histoire? Le corps dans l'historigraphie thucydidéenne, *Metis* 12 (1997), 223-267, especially 244ff.; KALIMTZIS, K., *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*: An Inquiry into Stasis, Albany (N.Y.), SUNY Press, 2000; BROCK, R., Sickness in the Body Politic: Medical Imagery in the Greek Polis. in: HOPE, V. M., MARSHALL, E. (ed.), *Death and Disease in the Ancient City*, London, Routledge, 2000, 24-34 (=BROCK, R., *Greek Political Imagery from Homer to Aristotle*, London/N.Y., Bloomsbury Academic, 2013, 69-80); KOSAK, C. J., Polis nosousa. Greek Ideas About the City and Disease in the Ffth Century BC, in: HOPE, V. M., MARSHALL, E. (ed.), *Death and Disease in the Ancient City*, *op. cit*., 35-54; MORAVCSIK, J., Health, Healing, and Plato's Ethics, *Journal of Value Inquiry* 34 (2000), 7-26; GOTTELAND, S., La cité malade chez les orateurs grecs de l'époque classique, *ibi*, 237-251; DESCLOS, M.-L., *Aux marges des dialogues de Platon*. Essai d'histoire anthropologique de la philosophie ancienne, Grenoble, J. Millon, 2003, 111ff.; PRICE, J. J., *Thucydides and Internal War*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, 14ff., 18, 21, 28f.; JOUANNA, J., Cause and Crisis in Historians and Medical Writers of the Classical Period, in: EIJK, P. van der (ed.), *Hippocrates in Context*. Papers Read at the XIth International Hippocrates Colloquium University of Newcastle upon Tyne 27-31 August 2002, Leiden/Boston, Brill, 2005, 3-27, ,especially 17ff.; LÉVY, E., Isonomia, in: U. BULTRIGHINI (ed.), *Democrazia e antidemocrazia nel mondo greco*. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Chieti, 9-11 aprile 2003 (Università degli studi « G. d'Annunzio », Collana del Dipartimento di scienzedell'antichità. Sezione storica, 8), Alessandria, Edizioni dell'Orso, 2005, 119-137; CASERTA, C., Normale e patologico nel corpo e nella polis: «isonomia» e armonia fra VI e V secolo, in: ROCCHI, G. D. (ed.), *Tra concordia e pace*: parole e valori della Grecia antica: giornata di studio: Milano, 21 ottobre 2005, Milano, Cisalpino, 2007, 65-87; LABORDERIE, J., Médecine et politique: note sur Platon et Aristote, in: E. van der SCHUEREN et al. (ed.), *Une traversée des savoirs*. Mélanges offerts à Jackie Pigeaud, Québec, Presses de l'Université Laval, 2008, 3-17.

an essential component of the peculiar anthropological model at stake in Socrates' first speech. For this reason, the two principles are presented as contrasting with each other, as being in a state of potential conflict. The speaker insists on their distinguishing traits. While one is directed towards ἡδονή, the other is directed towards τὸ ἄριστον (237d8) or τὸ ὀρθόν (238c1). While one is innate, ἔμφυτος, the other is acquired, ἐπίκτητος.

The contrast between the innateness of ἐπιθυμία and the acquired nature of δόξα can be interpreted in different ways and has important consequences for our understanding of the anthropological model at stake in this speech. The fact that one of the principles can be described as "acquired" suggests the possibility that, at least for a time, the innate principle is the only one present. There could be a moment where there is no δόξα, only ἐπιθυμία. That is apparently the same as saying that, at least for a time, and under certain circumstances, human behaviour could be explained by using one single principle, by using an alphabet with one single letter. This sits oddly with the political and medical models that seem to have been used as the template of this anthropological understanding. Both models aim to explain a multiplicity of apparently confusing phenomena by applying a finite and identifiable set of determinations. Neither these models, however, use only one principle. The political model especially, which is alluded throughout this passage by the substantial use of political terminology, seems to be irreducible to a single principle. This is apparently so since conflict is an integral and fundamental part of the anthropological model at stake in this speech. Surely, one could say, there can only be conflict if there is more than one party. Without the counterbalance of δόξα, there is no possibility of σωφροσύνη. With the exclusive presence of ἐπιθυμία, there can only be ὕβρις. To say that ἐπιθυμία is innate and that δόξα is acquired is the same as saying that ὕβρις is the default condition of human life. Ἐπιθυμία reigns supreme because it reigns alone. In this case, the emergence of the acquired principle is a condition *sine qua non* for the occurrence of the conflict described in this anthropological model.

Yet, even in the absence of δόξα, there is the possibility of conflict. The reason for this is that even in that case, even in a state of undiluted, unopposed ὕβρις, human behaviour cannot be reduced to a single principle. In fact, the anthropological model presented in Socrates' first speech makes use not of one alphabet, but two. This second alphabet is a subdivision of the first, a sub-alphabet, if you will. Ἐπιθυμία is not simple. It varies according to its object, or, to be more precise, according to that which the focus of the desiderative tension. Within the generic designation of ἐπιθυμία, there are different

species[177]. A situation that is characterised by the predominance of ἐπιθυμία will assume different configurations according to which specific species of ἐπιθυμία is predominant. As Socrates emphasises, the predominance of ἐπιθυμία, ὕβρις, includes within itself different forms, it is πολυειδές, has different ramifications, πολυμελὲς, and can go by many names, πολυώνυμον (238a3ff.)[178]. It is an intrinsically multiple or plural phenomenon. But within this multiplicity or plurality, one specific kind of ἐπιθυμία will have the upper hand, will be the foremost, will have more weight and influence over one's behaviour. One can be dominated by the desire for food, or for drinking, or any other desire, including the desire for sex (238a5ff.)[179]. None of these desires exclude the others, and they can coexist within the same human being, in the same situation. But the fact that one of them can be predominant in a situation of ὕβρις suggests that there is some degree of, if not conflict, competition between them[180]. In any case, a human being in a situation of ὕβρις will be defined, according to this anthropological model, by what specific species of ἐπιθυμία is dominant. And if this is so in a situation that is already marked by the conflict between ἐπιθυμία and δόξα, sc. a situation where ἐπιθυμία has gained the upper hand over δόξα, something similar will occur, *a fortiori*, in the complete absence of δόξα.

[177] To sum up, in this anthropological model we find a binary system in which one of its terms, ἐπιθυμία, is further subdivided in multiple species. This is one further "Platonic" aspect of this speech. Elsewhere in the *corpus* we find the emphasis is put on the opposition between φιλοσοφία and what is described as φιλοσώματος in the *Phaedo* (68c1). What seems to be at stake there is, not entirely unlike Socrates' first speech in the *Phaedrus*, a system of forces consisting in a competition between two major sources of tension, each striving for competing goals. The binary system of the *Phaedo*, however, seems to be "replaced" by a tripartite system in *Republic* IX (480d1ff). By this we mean that the tension and interaction between three principles of human tension: φιλοσοφία, φιλοτιμία/φιλονικία, and φιλοκέρδεια. These seem to be competing models, in which the principle known as φιλοσοφία is the only common element. However, an analysis of the notion of φιλοσώματος clearly suggests that it includes what is at stake in both notions of φιλοτιμία/φιλονικία and φιλοκέρδεια. This might indicate that φιλοσώματος is the designation of the genre of which the φιλοτιμία/φιλονικία and φιλοκέρδεια are the species. This is analogous to the subdivisions of ἐπιθυμία mentioned in the passage we are analysing at the moment. The difference between the anthropological model in Socrates' first speech and the model found elsewhere in the *corpus* resides in the details. See also chapter VI, p. 574ff.

[178] "ὕβρις δὲ δὴ πολυώνυμον —πολυμελὲς γὰρ καὶ πολυειδές —καὶ τούτων τῶν ἰδεῶν ἐκπρεπὴς ἢ ἂν τύχῃ γενομένη, τὴν αὑτῆς ἐπωνυμίαν ὀνομαζόμενον τὸν ἔχοντα παρέχεται, οὔτε τινὰ καλὴν οὔτ᾽ ἐπαξίαν κεκτῆσθαι." The exact text of this passage is uncertain and the object of discussion among scholars. See THOMPSON, *ad locum*; STALLBAUM, *ad locum*; VERDENIUS, 272; DE VRIES, *ad locum*; SALA, 114, *ad locum*.

[179] περὶ μὲν γὰρ ἐδωδὴν κρατοῦσα τοῦ λόγου τε τοῦ ἀρίστου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιθυμιῶν ἐπιθυμία γαστριμαργία τε καὶ τὸν ἔχοντα ταὐτὸν τοῦτο κεκλημένον παρέξεται: περὶ δ᾽ αὖ μέθας τυραννεύσασα, τὸν κεκτημένον ταύτῃ ἄγουσα, δῆλον οὗ τεύξεται προσρήματος· καὶ τἆλλα δὴ τὰ τούτων ἀδελφὰ καὶ ἀδελφῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν ὀνόματα τῆς ἀεὶ δυναστευούσης ᾗ προσήκει καλεῖσθαι πρόδηλον.

[180] This conflict or competition becomes especially evident either when there is hypertrophy of one of the ἐπιθυμίαι, or when there is a situation in which one is urged to pick one in favour of the others.

Even though the ostensive aim of this whole section of Socrates' first speech is to provide a definition of ἔρως, the emphasis is mostly on the difference between ἐπιθυμία and δόξα, not on the different kinds of ἐπιθυμία and their competing claims. The search for the the specific difference that distinguishes ἔρως from the other forms of ἐπιθυμία is set within a framework dominated by the opposition between δόξα and ἐπιθυμία. In this regard, what is said about ἔρως applies not only to ἔρως, but to every form of ἐπιθυμία. It is only in the end of this section that the difference between the specific modality of ἐπιθυμία that is ἔρως and the others comes to the forefront.

The alternate reign of these two principles translates into the predominance of their respective *termini ad quos*. They are, to a significant degree, defined by them, and these, by extension, determine the course of one's life.

The *termini ad quos* of ἐπιθυμία, the ἡδοναί, seem quite straightforward. Having desires seems to be a common human experience. Even more than that, being lead and ruled by one's desires is something that can be perceived as a distinct possibility. To desire something is to have a representation of a certain object. This representation is not merely cognitive. Especially in the case of desire, we are never just spectators. The representation of the object has the peculiar characteristic of exerting pressure. It is appealing, it fascinates, it calls one towards it. One does not just want to passively look at the object; one wants to have it and enjoy it. Hunger is a good example of this phenomenon. A hungry person does not want to look at food; a hungry person would not be satisfied with a mere theoretical representation of food: a hungry person wants to eat. The fact that desire is described as ἔμφυτος points to something we usually take for granted: human beings are intrinsically desiderative beings. The ability to have desires is not something one acquires or develops. It is something that has always been there from the start; or, if I may be more accurate, from the moment one finds oneself existing, one discovers oneself as a being capable of desires. The predominance of ἐπιθυμία, however, is more than just simply having desires. It is rather a situation where one's course in life is defined by desire.

In contrast, the *terminus ad quem* of δόξα, τὸ ἄριστον or τὸ ὀρθόν, is a lot more difficult to identify. It is much clearer, however, the role it plays in the economy of the system of forces at stake here. The relationship with τὸ ἄριστον or τὸ ὀρθόν serves as a counterweight to the principle that pulls towards ἡδονή. Socrates' first speech goes as far as to state the possibility of δόξα being able to overcome the natural prevalence of

ἐπιθυμία, replacing ἡδονή by τὸ ἄριστον as that which one's life is ultimately drawn to and determined by. In order to do that, δόξα has to somehow overthrow the already established reign of ἐπιθυμία. One could say (even though Socrates does not), that as the Olympian gods dethroned, expelled and exiled their predecessors, so does δόξα have to claim predominance, subjugate and keep in check the already active, well established and settled ἐπιθυμία. No matter how successful it may be in acquiring dominance, δόξα will be unable to expel ἐπιθυμία and annul its influence as a guiding principle. Even when defeated and subjugated, ἐπιθυμία remains where it has always been.

One, however, should avoid falling into the trap of interpreting the opposition between ἔμφυτος and ἐπίκτητος has being simply equivalent to the opposition between innate and acquired in the temporal sense of the terms. In other words, it is likely that what Socrates means by this opposition is something different from what we have been assuming so far, i.e., that one is born bearing ἐπιθυμίαι, but that δόξα is supervenient, a latecomer, so to speak. What defines δόξα as ἐπίκτητος, however, is not necessarily the fact that it arrives last, but rather the fact that it is the result of reflexion or deliberation. The contrast is not between something that is innate (i.e., something that has always been there) and something that is acquired (i.e., something that comes into play at a later point in time), but rather between something that is immediate (i.e., that does not require any kind of reflexion or deliberation), and something that needs reflexion or deliberation in order to be established. The nature of ἐπιθυμία as an immediate principle is not difficult to grasp. Its *terminus ad quem* is naturally alluring, appealing and attractive. One follows it, regardless of anything else. In other words, to follow ἐπιθυμία, to go after ἡδονή, corresponds to a sort of default orientation. Δόξα, however, has to be constituted, settled or established. It requires the creation of a perspective that is not immersed within the default orientation towards ἡδονή, but that, on the contrary, looks at it from a distance. This is a perspective that assesses and ponders the validity and desireability of following ἐπιθυμία. This constitutes, in a way, a form of "technical" deliberation: a deliberation that results from a perspective that understands what is going on, and is capable of intervening effectively on the state of affairs at stake. The difference between the ἔμφυτος and ἐπίκτητος natures of ἐπιθυμία and δόξα might therefore not be merely a temporal difference, but rather a modal one: somewhat like the difference between the perspective of a layperson and the perspective of a τεχνίτης. But in this case, the "τέχνη" at stake is a

τέχνη that identifies what is τὸ ἄριστον or τὸ ὀρθόν in how one leads one's life. It is, so speak, a τέχνη κυβερνητική applied to life.

The term δόξα, however, may seem odd to designate this ἰδέα. In the *corpus platonicum*, it is frequently used to designate a form of relation to the truth somewhere between complete obliviousness and true knowledge. It is more than nothing, inasmuch as it corresponds to a notification of something, but it does not correspond to knowledge proper[181]. It is characterised especially by the fact that it is not yet knowledge, by the fact that something fundamental is missing. The missing element is not necessarily truth or correctness. A δόξα can be correct or it can be wrong. What characterises δόξα is that it lacks grounding, or suffers from some other kind of defect. It is a form of knowledge that is degraded, lacking in something. And so δόξα designates a notion that is adopted even though it is defective in some way. In this sense, the fact that a δόξα can be correct is irrelevant. The fact that it might be correct does not result from an actual understanding of the state of affairs at stake: it is merely a coincidence. In the context of the *corpus platonicum*, the word δόξα has clear negative undertones. To use the term δόξα may hint at its deficient nature, at its fallibility, and, more seriously, at its haphazard nature. To choose what is best and how to reach it through a process with such a denomination may suggest that there is something intrinsically wrong with the characterisation of human nature done by the αἰμύλος – and that the δόξα at stake here is very different from the kind of deliberation that is characteristic of τέχνη. This impression is reinforced by the facts, already noted, that the fictional speaker of this speech is: both a lover, and therefore lacking in φρονεῖν, and a liar.

Nevertheless, there would be no point in inserting this term in the αἰμύλος' speech unless it made some sort of internal sense, unless it could be understood in a positive light. In fact, there are other meanings of δόξα that can justify the choice of this word to designate this ἰδέα. And it is clear that these are the meanings that are primarily at stake at this point in Socrates' first speech. In certain passages, such as *Philebus* 37c-39a or *Theaetetus* 189e-190a, δόξα – or, to be more precise, the verb δοξάζειν, of which δόξα can in many cases be the *nomen actionis* – describes the act of judgement, the act by which one passes from a moment of uncertainty and hesitation to the assertion "it is X".

[181] Cf. the use of δόξα and δοξάζειν in *Republic* V, 476e8ff, as the mode of access that is μεταξύ regarding the complete absence of any kind of access (ἀγνωσία or ἄγνοια) and the cognitively perfect access that corresponds to γνῶσις or ἐπιστήμη. See chapter V, p. 331ff., below.

It denotes that something is settled, fixed[182]. It constitutes the moment when indecision and hesitation is replaced by judicative fixation. It is the opposite of doubt. It has a

[182] On the multiplicity of usages and meanings of δόξα and its correlate verb δοξάζειν in the *corpus Platonicum*, and pre-Platonic literature, see: GROTE, G., *Plato, and the Other Companions of Socrates* 2, London, J. Murray, 1865, 374ff., 424ff.; IHM, O, *Über den Begriff der platonischen Doxa und deren Verhältnis zum Wissen der Ideen*, Leipzig, Edelmann, 1877; SCHIRLITZ, C., *Der Begriff der doxa in Platons Theaetetos*, Stargard, Hendress, 1905; GEYSER, J., Das Verhältnis von αἴσθησις und δόξα in den Abschnitt 151e-187a von Platons Theaitet, in: *Studien zur Geschichte der Philosophie*, Festgabe zum 60. Geburstag Clemens Baeumker gewidmet von seinem Schülern und Freunden, Münster i. W., Aschendorff, 1913, 1-23; SOUILHÉ, J., *La notion Platonicienne d'intermédiaire dans la philosophie des dialogues*, Paris, Alcan, 1919, 76-92; NATORP, P., *Platos Ideenlehre*. 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P., *Plato on Knowledge and Reality*, Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Co., 1976, 162ff.; REALE, G., Il concetto di opinion (doxa) e le ragioni della sua svalutazione teoretica negli Eleati e in Platone, *Contributi dell' Istituto di Istoria Antica dell' Università del Sacro Cuore* 5 (1978), 7-32; FINE, G., Knowledge and Belief in Republic V, *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 60 (1978), 121-139; EADEM, Knowledge and Logos in the Theaetetus, *The Philosophical Review* 88 (1979), 366-397; ; LAFRANCE, Y., *La théorie Platonicienne de la doxa*, Montreal/Paris, Bellarmin/Les Belles Lettres, 1981; DETIENNE, M., *Les maîtres de vérité dans la Grèce archaïque*, Paris, Maspero, 1981, 109ff., 134ff.; IDEM, Doxa et episteme chez Platon selon Th. Ebert, *Dialogue* 21 (1982), 3-26; GRAESER, A., Über der Sinn von Sein bei Platon, *Museum Helveticum* 39 (1982), 29-42; CHERNISS, H., Lafrance on Doxa, *Dialogue* 22 (1983), 137-162; MORGAN, M. L., Belief, Knowledge and Learning in Plato's Middle Dialogues, in: PELLETIER, F. J. (ed.), *New Essays on Plato* (Canadian Journal of Philosophy, Suppl. Vol. IX), Guelph, Ontario, Canadian Association of Publ. in Philosophy, 1983, 63-100; MARCOS DE PINOTTI, G. E., La distinción platónica entre episteme y doxa alethes a la luz del tratamiento der error (Teeteto 188a-c), *Rivista di Filosofia* 2 (1987), 135-155; FINE, G., Knowledge and Belief in Republic V-VII, in: EVERSON, S. (ed.), *Epistemology* (Companions to Ancient Greek Thought 1), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, 85-115; GRAESER, A., Platons Auffassung von Wissen und Meinen

cognitive content, because it says something about its object: that it is, for example, a tree, or a statue or a man. It is not difficult to understand that δοξάζειν is a fundamental element of vital navigation. It is through δόξα, in this peculiar sense, that one is able to settle what is going on at each moment, deliberate and make decisions, and thereby set a course for one's life – even if what comes out of this δοξάζειν falls short of cognitive perfection.

It is this meaning of the term δόξα that seems to be most at stake in this passage of the *Phaedrus*. The meaning in this passage of the *Phaedrus* seems to be akin to that: a form of judgement, and, in this context and, for the sake of the αἰμύλος' argument, correct judgment. It makes sense to use the term δόξα to designate what is, after all, the determination of what matters in life, and what one should do at each moment. While desire is immediate and drags one without any thought or understanding – "ἀλόγως ἑλκούσης" (238a) – δόξα requires understanding. In this sense, δόξα corresponds to the reflexive moment that is opposed to the automatic nature of the ἐπιθυμίαι that drag towards ἡδονή. It is, if you will, "rational", not specifically in the sense that it emerges from any kind of dialectical reflection or thought, but in the sense that it appears in cognitive form and is based in some sort of knowledge. This knowledge, however, is not necessarily any kind of theoretical knowledge. It rather seems to be the ability to identify the options that will lead one to the desired *terminus ad quem*: τὸ ἄριστον or τὸ ὀρθόν[183].

in Politeia V, *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 98 (1991), 365-388; SZAIF, J., *Platons Begriff der Wahrheit*, Freiburg/München, Alber, 1996, 66f., 84f., 100ff., 139ff., 183ff., 300ff., 327ff., 356ff.; BALTZLY, D., Knowledge and Belief in Republic V, *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 129 (1997), 239-272; HORN, C., Platons epistêmê-doxa-Unterscheidung und die Ideetheorie (Buch V 474b-480a und Buch X 595c-597e), in: HÖFFE, O. (ed.), *Platon Politeia*, Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 1997, 291-312; DIXSAUT, M., Qu'appelle-t-on penser? Du dialogue intérieur de l'âme selon Platon, in: EADEM, *Platon et la question de la pensée*, Études Platoniciennes I, Paris, Vrin, 2000, 47-70; NARCY, M., Doxazei: "opinare" o "giudicare", in: CASERTANO, G. (ed.), *Il Teeteto di Platone: struttura e problematiche*, Napoli, Loffredo, 2002, 7-23; FERRARI, F., Verità e giudizio: il senso e la funzione del'essere tra αἴσθησις e δόξα, *ibidem*, 156-174; MOJSISCH, B., "Doxa" und "Phantasia" in der Sprachphilosophie Platons, in: DEWENDER, T., WELT, T. (ed.), *Imagination – Fiktion – Kreation: das kulturschaffende Vermögen der Phantasie*, München, Saur, 2003, 13-22; ROWE, C., Plato on Knowing and Merely Believing, in: DETEL, W., BECKER, A., SCHOLZ, P. (ed.), *Ideal and Culture of Knowledge in Plato*. Akten der 4. Tagung der Karl-und-Gertrud-Abel-Stiftung vom 1.-3. September 2000 im Frankfurt (Philosophie der Antike, vol. 15), Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2003, 57-68; THANASSAS, P., Doxa revisitata, in: RECHENAUER, G. (ed.), *Frühgriechisches Denken*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005, 270-289; SCOLNICOV, S., Plato on Language and "doxa", *Ordia prima* 4 (2005), 75-87; LAFRANCE, Y., la connaissance: science et opinion, in: BRISSON, L., FRONTEROTTA (ed.), *Lire Platon*, Paris, PUF, 2006, 165-187; CARVALHO, M. J., Μέθοδος e ὑπόθεσις – o problema do pressuposto na fundação platónica da ciência, in: FERRER, D. (ed.), *Método e Métodos do Pensamento Filosófico*, Coimbra, Imprensa da Universidade, 2007, 9-69; SZAIF, J., Doxa and Epistêmê as modes of acquaintance in Republic V, *Études Platoniciennes* 4 (2007), 253-272.

[183] This specific understanding of δόξα and δοξάζειν in Socrates' first speech might contain a possible allusion to the Isocratean use: a form of "practical" establishment of a recognition of reality that does not aspire to cognitive perfection. See ISOCRATES, *Helen*, 5:"ὅτι πολὺ κρεῖττόν ἐστι περὶ τῶν χρησίμων

The prevalence of δόξα, therefore, requires the construction of a reflective perspective that goes beyond the immediacy and innateness of the tension towards ἡδονή. This perspective is different from and situated beyond the normal, innate one. It is also a perspective that, in order to compete with ἐπιθυμία, has to be somewhat durable and consistent. Δόξα therefore requires the constitution of a τέχνη of sorts. By this we mean an acquired perspective, that is, to borrow Aristotle's formulation, παρὰ τὰς κοινὰς αἰσθήσεις[184]. In this specific case, we are dealing with a perspective that goes beyond the immediate allure of ἡδονή, and is able to look elsewhere, to τὸ ἄριστον or τὸ ὀρθόν. As with τέχναι, there is a significant "practical" aspect to this perspective. This is a perspective that allows one to manage one's life according to a specific principle, which is independent from the innate, default and already determined principle that drags towards ἡδονή. It is, in a sense, a perspective that provides autonomy from the automatic rule of ἐπιθυμία – and allows one to choose a different *terminus ad quem* and lead one's life accordingly.

But to what τὸ ἄριστον or τὸ ὀρθόν might actually correspond remains very vague. From what we have seen so far, we can only understand what it is not: it is a principle that is not ἡδονή. To be more specific, it is a principle that is opposed to ἡδονή and is presented as an alternative by δόξα to the immediate regency of ἐπιθυμία. The text does not tell us more than that. Namely, it does not provide us with a *positive* identification of what τὸ ἄριστον or τὸ ὀρθόν might be. This is a formal notion. This means that, while it has a specific content, i.e., its meaning can be easily distinguished from other concepts such as potato or dolphin or Chancellor of the Exchequer, yet when we try to determine what that content is, we are unable to do it. But the fact that it is formal, that we are never given a positive determination of what it might be, does not diminish its effectiveness. Within the anthropological model drawn in this speech, τὸ ἄριστον or τὸ ὀρθόν appears as a *terminus ad quem* that is exterior to ἡδονή, and that cannot be reduced to it. It is something different altogether. And yet, it still creates pressure, it is still capable of determining one's life in one way or another. It might not have the immediate appeal of

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ἐπιεικῶς δοξάζειν ἢ περὶ τῶν ἀχρήστων ἀκριβῶς ἐπίστασθαι"; IDEM, *Panathenaicus*, 30: "τίνας οὖν καλῶ πεπαιδευμένους, ἐπειδὴ τὰς τέχνας καὶ τὰς ἐπιστήμας καὶ τὰς δυνάμεις ἀποδοκιμάζω; πρῶτον μὲν τοὺς καλῶς χρωμένους τοῖς πράγμασι τοῖς κατὰ τὴν ἡμέραν ἑκάστην προσπίπτουσι, καὶ τὴν δόξαν ἐπιτυχῆ τῶν καιρῶν ἔχοντας καὶ δυναμένην ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ στοχάζεσθαι τοῦ συμφέροντος". Cf. EDWARDS, M., USHER, S. (ed.), *Greek orators*, Chicago, Bolchazy Carducci, 1990, Vol. 3, 9.

[184] *Metaphysics* A, 981b14.

ἡδονή – and yet it is still a contender in this competition. The fact that there is a principle such as δόξα, with a *terminus ad quem* that can compete with ἡδονή, means that human life cannot be reduced to a game between different forms of ἐπιθυμία. In other words, there is a component in human life that sees beyond the immediate seduction of ἡδονή, and that posits a *terminus ad quem* that, in spite of its formal nature, can still play a decisive role. In a life ruled by δόξα, it is the conformity with this peculiar *terminus ad quem* that is used as a criterion to decide which path to follow and which to abandon. In other words, under the rule of δόξα, the different ἐπιθυμίαι are set against the formal *terminus ad quem* – τὸ ἄριστον or τὸ ὀρθόν – and are rejected or pursued accordingly.

All of this, of course, is very vague – and this vagueness allows for a multiplicity of possible interpretations of what exactly τὸ ἄριστον can be. One of these possible interpretations can be found when we consider the specific cultural setting in which the speech is being produced – and especially the values which a proper citizen would be expected to live by. Ancient Greek society insisted in the utmost importance of φιλοτιμία, the love of being admired and praised by others. In the context of a Greek πόλις, being admired by your fellow-citizen required not only doing your best to serve the πόλις, but also displaying a personal behaviour considered irreproachable by others. To be dignified and have a good reputation entailed performing one's duties as a citizen, in assembly or in a law-court, or, especially, in the battlefield. It also entailed behaving towards other fellow-citizens honestly and with respect towards their dignity. A good reputation also required σωφροσύνη, in the sense of moderation and self-control. A man that could not contain his desires would act greedily or wantonly. He would strive to get more than his fair share, or acquire his fellow-citizens' property. He would indulge himself in food, wine, gambling or sex. Displays of excessive attachment to pleasures would be looked down upon and detract from one's dignity. If "the best" corresponds to being looked on admiringly, then the community's perspective plays a fundamental role[185].

It is not difficult to understand how this philotimic worldview comes to be opposed to a life dominated by the pursuit of ἡδονή. One need only remember that glory

[185] It is noteworthy that one of the possible terms to designate the opinion others have of one, one's reputation, happens to be δόξα. This means that the term δόξα itself has philotimic overtones. If τὸ ἄριστον is to be understood in this very specific way, the term δόξα might be understood as something like the voice of an internalised socially shared perspective, the standard used to judge the suitability of one's actions to the philotimic project that corresponds to τὸ ἄριστον. In the text, however, this does not go beyond the mere allusion, at the most.

and the admiration of others was ranked very high among the Greeks, that that meant a life of struggle and toil and endless effort to be the best, to surpass all others, and that, in order to achieve this goal, one always needs to renounce something, namely, the immediate satisfaction of one's desires. This, of course, does not mean that the ideal life was one of asceticism in the name of one's personal glory. One could very well have desires and pleasures, but they should not be used as the compass that guides one's life. A life dedicated to the immediate satisfaction of one's desires leaves little room for the struggle to acquire the admiration of others[186].

I admit that interpreting δόξα and τὸ ἄριστον in a mainly philotimic sense constitutes a significant restriction in meaning. To say that every human being aspires to happiness and is the bearer of a principle of action that makes him or her act accordingly to this aspiration is a statement that sounds universally valid. To say that every human being aspires to be admired by the members of community and that he uses the values and opinions commonly held by that community to guide his life sounds like a rather parochial version of the above statement – a mere set of anthropological observations merely applicable to a group of relatively small communities living around the Aegean Sea millennia ago. Socrates' characterisation of human nature in this speech then becomes a culturally specific thesis presented under the guise of a universal truth.

But we should not forget that the fictional speaker is a αἰμύλος, someone who lies about not being in love, as well as someone who fails miserably in his self-attributed task of defining the terms of the matter at hand. He is a "wannabe", a poseur: someone who pretends to be someone he is not. And this applies not only to his status as a non-lover, but also to his intellectual inclinations. Like someone who wears glasses without prescription and carries heavy books by obscure authors he will never read so that he may appear intellectually superior, the αἰμύλος uses lofty and seemingly philosophical language to add gravitas and persuasive effect to his speech[187]. When describing the two principles and the way they interact, he is not necessarily presenting a new and profound understanding of human nature: he is using rather obscure and vague language to describe the commonly held beliefs regarding σωφροσύνη as moderation and self-control, with aristocratic overtones added to the mix. It is possible that these beliefs might be accurate

[186] See, e.g., 238a: τὴν αὑτῆς ἐπωνυμίαν ὀνομαζόμενον τὸν ἔχοντα παρέχεται, οὔτε τινὰ καλὴν οὔτ᾽ ἐπαξίαν κεκτῆσθαι.
[187] See PIEPER, J., *Enthusiasm and Divine Madness*, South Bend, Indiana, St. Augustine's Press, 1999, 33.

and profound, but the αἰμύλος' explanation amounts to nothing more than to a pretentious presentation of these beliefs with the intent of using them to manipulate the boy. Following the philotimic interpretation, by appealing to δόξα as reputation and τὸ ἄριστον in the philotimic sense, the αἰμύλος is firmly anchoring his statements in the apparently unmovable bedrock of the socially shared perspective. If one wants to be considered σῶφρον, one has to conform to the rules and expectations of a community that placed a great value on moderation and self-control. Σωφροσύνη is valuable also because it is useful. To have a reputation as σῶφρον is equivalent to being socially accepted and respected. To be known for one's unrestrained and wanton behaviour, for one's ὕβρις is tantamount to social suicide. If τὸ ἄριστον is to be admired, then to conform or even to exceed social expectations in what regards one of the most prized social values is the road to happiness.

However, we should not lose sight of the fact that the anthropological model presented in Socrates' first speech is formal and vague in this regard. He never tells us what τὸ ἄριστον is. This is a matter that remains undecided. Τὸ ἄριστον or τὸ ὀρθόν admits a multiplicity of meanings, and several possible kinds of deformalisation[188]. What makes this particular interpretation plausible is that it fits with the values of the specific cultural setting in which the speech is being produced. The key is to understand what the pretended target of the speech, the boy, would have understood as τὸ ἄριστον – and this is not clear at all. The social model assumes that the boy is imagined as being entirely conventional and proper in his outlook, and that he would value, as a nice Athenian boy ought to, honour and reputation above all else. In this case, the philotimic interpretation works, since it provides δόξα with its own *terminus ad quem*, different from ἐπιθυμία's.

Some would perhaps object that λόγος will in this case remain purely instrumental, which sounds "unplatonic". But when we remember that what is at stake in δόξα may not necessarily be the philosophical drive *simpliciter*, but the philosophical drive as applied in a concrete existential situation, this becomes a lot less troublesome. The philosophical components of human existence will become instruments in the pursuit

[188] To deformalize it as pleasure does not produce σωφροσύνη, but rather ὕβρις. See GRISWOLD, *op. cit.*, 63. Griswold's suggestion that the notion of σωφροσύνη at stake in this passage actually consists in cleverness or efficiency in pursuit of pleasure makes the model collapse on itself. One could argue that this is done intentionally to show the inconsistency of the "popular" understanding of σωφροσύνη as self-control. But this could only be argued with certainty if pleasure were the only possible deformalisation for the vague and formal τὸ ἄριστον.

of of any of a multiplicity of existential goals and in subduing desires in their pursuit of pleasures. The model itself is not incompatible with a philosophical way of life: one would live one's life in the pursuit of knowledge and subordinate to that goal the natural drive to pursue pleasures. Τὸ ἄριστον in the philotimic sense is just one amongst a variety of possibilities – a possibility that happens to be in complete conformity with the socially shared perspective that is endorsed as φρόνιμος. In the end, any interpretation of what τὸ ἄριστον or τό ὀρθόν might mean will fit the vague anthropological model drawn by Socrates in this speech, as long as it accounts for the conflict between the two principles, ἐπιθυμία and δόξα.

That the relationship between ἐπιθυμία and δόξα is marked by conflict or, at least, the potential for conflict is explicitly stated in 237d-e: "τούτω δὲ ἐν ἡμῖν τοτὲ μὲν ὁμονοεῖτον, ἔστι δὲ ὅτε στασιάζετον· καὶ τοτὲ μὲν ἡ ἑτέρα, ἄλλοτε δὲ ἡ ἑτέρα κρατεῖ"[189]. The two principles, ἐπιθυμία and δόξα, can be either in agreement or in conflict with each other; whenever there is conflict, one of them has the upper hand. The reference to στάσις seems quite straightforward: if ἐπιθυμία has the upper hand, δόξα will fight against it; if δόξα has the upper hand, ἐπιθυμία will do the same. This turns human life into a battlefield between two warring parties in a civil war. The notion of στάσις at stake here corresponds to the political notion of στάσις. In a πόλις inhabited by two parties with opposing and competing claims, στάσις occurs when one of them is a position to actively contest the dominance of the other. In other words, there is στάσις when there is civil unrest, even outright civil war. There is στάσις when there is an actual dispute for power[190].

[189] Cf. THRASYMACHUS DK 1, 26ff.: "ἅλις γὰρ ἡμῖν ὁ παρελθὼν χρόνος καὶ ἀντὶ μὲν εἰρήνης ἐν πολέμῳ γενέσθαι καὶ διὰ κινδύνων <ἐλθεῖν> εἰς τόνδε τὸν χρόνον,τὴν μὲν παρελθοῦσαν ἡμέραν ἀγαπῶσι, τὴν δ' ἐπιοῦσαν δεδιόσι, ἀντὶ δ' ὁμονοίας εἰς ἔχθραν καὶ ταραχὰς πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀφικέσθαι. καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὑβρίζειν τε ποιεῖ καὶ στασιάζειν, ἡμεῖς δὲ μετὰ μὲν τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐσωφρονοῦμεν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς κακοῖς ἐμάνημεν, ἃ τοὺς ἄλλους σωφρονίζειν εἴωθεν." See FUKS, A., *The Ancestral Constitution*, London, Routledge & Paul, 1953, 102-106; NORTH, H. F., *Sophrosyne*. Self-Knowledge and Self-Restraint in Greek literature, Ithaca, N. Y., Cornell University Press, 1966, 115; WHITE, S. A., Thrasymachus the Diplomat, *Classical Philology* 90 (1995), 307-327; FUKS, A., *The Ancestral Constitution*, London, Routledge & Paul, 1953, 102-106

[190] On στάσις and ὁμόνοια, see: TARN, W. W., *Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind*, London: Humphrey Milford, 1933, 5; LEGON, R. P., *Demos and stasis*. Studies in the factional politics of classical Greece, diss. Cornell University, Ithaca, 1966; PERLMAN, S., Isocrates' Philippus and panhellenism, *Historia* 18 (1969), 370-374; FUKS, A., Thucydides and the stasis in Corcyra. Thuc., III,82,3 versus , III,84, *American Journal of Philology* 92 (1971), 48-55; ROMILLY, J. de., Les différents aspects de la concorde dans l'œuvre de Platon, *Revue de Philologie, de littérature et d'histoire anciennes* 46 (1972), 7-20; ROMILLY, J. de, Vocabulaire et propagande, ou les premiers emplois du mot ὁμόνοια, in: ERNOUT, A. (ed.), *Mélanges de linguistique et de philologie grecques offerts à Pierre Chantraine*, Paris, Klincksieck, 1972, 199-209; MOULAKIS, A., *Homonoia*. Eintracht und Entwicklung eines politischen Bewusstseins, München, List, 1973; EDMUNDS, L., Thucydides' ethics as reflected in the description of stasis (3.82-83),

The reference to ὁμόνοια, however, is more complex. On the one hand, it implies that there is some sort of agreement possible between the two warring parties, an agreement that would consist in a conciliation between them. As we have seen earlier, ἐπιθυμία and δόξα are presented in this speech as two opposing principles, with different *termini ad quos*. Apparently, the only way these two principles would be in agreement is if there was a coincidence between the *termini ad quos*. Because of the vague and formal nature of τὸ ἄριστον, this is not at all unthinkable. It is perfectly possible that in some

Harvard Studies in Classical Philology 79 (1975), 73-92; MACLEOD, C. W., Thucydides on faction (3.82.83), *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 25 (1979), 52-68; BARNARD M. A., *Stasis in Thucydides*. Narrative and analysis of factionalism in the polis, diss. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1980; FUNKE, P., *Homonoia und Arche*. Athen und die griechische Staatenwelt vom Ende des Peloponnesischen Krieges bis zum Königsfrieden (404/3-387/6 v. Chr.), Wiesbaden, Steiner, 1980; CELATO, S., Homonoia e polis greca, *Atti del Centro Ricerche e Documentazione sull'Antichità Classica* 11 (1980-1981), 265-269; MANICAS, P. T., War, stasis and Greek political thought, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24 (1982), 673-688; GEHRKE, H. J., *Stasis*. Untersuchungen zu den inneren Kriegen in den griechischen Staaten des 5. und 4. Jh. v. Chr., München, Beck, 1985; LORAUX, N., Oikeios polemos. La guerra nella famiglia, *Studi Storici* 28 (1987), 5-35; SANCHO-ROCHER, L., El δῆμος y la στάσις en la obra de Tucídides, *Ktèma* 15 (1990), 195-215; ROMILLY, J., Isocrates and Europe, *Greece & Rome* 39 (1992), 2-13, especially 9-10; LORAUX, N., La guerre civile grecque et la représentation anthropologique du monde à l'envers, *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 212 (1995), 299-326; BERTELLI, L., La «stasis» dans la démocratie, in: DESCLOS, M.-L. (ed.), *Réflexions contemporaines sur l'antiquité classique* : Journées Henri Joly 1993 : actes du colloque international tenu à Grenoble les 25, 26 et 27 mars 1993, Grenoble, Université Pierre Mendès-France, 1996, 11-39; KLONOSKI, R. J., Homonoia in Aristotle's Ethics and Politics, *History of Political Thought* 17 (1996), 313-325; LORAUX, N., *La cité divisée* : l'oubli dans la mémoire d'Athènes, Paris, Payot (France), 1997; BERENT, M., Stasis, or the Greek invention of politics, *History of Political Thought* 19 (1998), 331-362; BERTRAND, J.-M., De la stasis dans les cités Platoniciennes, *Cahiers du Centre Gustave-Glotz* 10 (1999), 209-224; FORNIS, C., La «stásis» de Corcira (427-425) : Trasfondo social y marco geopolítico, *Florentia Iliberritana* 10 (1999), 95-112; MOGGI, M., «Stasis», «prodosia» e «polemos» in Tucidide, in: SORDI, M. (ed.), *Fazioni e congiure nel mondo antico*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 1999, 41-72; BROCK, R., Sickness in the body politic: medical imagery in the Greek polis, HOPE, V. M., MARSHALL, E. (ed.), *Death and disease in the ancient city*, London, Routledge, 2000. 24-34; FISHER, N. R. E., Hybris, revenge and stasis in the Greek city-states, in: VAN WEES, H. (ed.), War and violence in ancient Greece, Swansea, Classical Press of Wales, 2000, 83-123; DIETER, O. A. L., Stasis, *Speech Monographs* 17 (1950), 345-369; HOURCADE, A., L'«homonoia» selon Antiphon d'Athènes, *Elenchos* 22 (2001), 243-280; CORBOSIERO, M., Ὁμόνοια e στρατεία nel «Filippo» di Isocrate, *Rudiae* 13-14 (2001-2002), 11-41; SANCHO ROCHER, L., La tradición sobre la paz en el mundo griego: la «homónoia» democrática del 403, *Veleia* 18-19 (2001-2002), 191-200; OBER, J., Tyrant killing as therapeutic «stasis»: a political debate in images and texts, in: MORGAN, K. A. (ed.), Popular tyranny : sovereignty and its discontents in ancient Greece, Austin (Tex.), University of Texas Press, 2003, 215-250; KAMTEKAR, R., What's the good of agreeing? : ὁμόνοια in Platonic politics, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 26 (2004), 131-170; CUNIBERTI, G., Giurare e decretare la «homonoia»: nota a Thuc. VIII 75, 2 e 93, 3, in ROCCHI, G- D. (ed.), *Tra concordia e pace: parole e valori della Grecia antica*: giornata di studio, Milano, 21 ottobre 2005, Milano, Cisalpino, 2007, 39-54; ROCCHI, G. D. - La concordia: tema culturale, obiettivo politico e virtù cívica, in EADEM (ed.), *Tra concordia e pace : parole e valori della Grecia antica*: giornata di studio, Milano, 21 ottobre 2005, Milano, Cisalpino, 2007, 3-38; FANTASIA, U., Corcira, 427-425 a.C.: anatomia di una «stasis», in: BEARZOT, C., LANDUCCI, F. (ed.), *«Partiti» e fazioni nell'esperienza politica greca*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, 2008, 167-201; VAN WEES, H., «Stasis, destroyer of men» : mass, elite, political violence and security in archaic Greece, in: BRÉLAZ, C., DUCREY, P. (ed.), *Sécurité collective et ordre public dans les sociétés anciennes* : Vandœuvres-Genève, 20-24 août 2007 : sept exposés suivis de discussions, Genève-Vandœuvres, Fondation Hardt, 2008, 1-39; DE LUNA, M. E., Un'oligarchia concorde : il caso di Farsalo (Aristotele, Politica 5.6.10 [1306a 9-12]), in: BADOUD, N. (ed.), «Philologos Dionysios» : mélanges offerts au professeur Denis Knoepfler , Neuchâtel, Université de Neuchâtel, Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines, 2011, 467-477.

occasions the deformalisation of τὸ ἄριστον coincides with the goals of ἐπιθυμία. But, there is another possible way ὁμόνοια can be achieved. If στάσις is to be understood as a situation characterised by actual conflict between the two parties, then the victory of one of them will produce ὁμόνοια. If one of the parties gets the upper hand, ὁμόνοια is achieved, at least for as long as the other party remains weak and defeated. If ἐπιθυμία is dominant, δόξα will not have the strength to oppose it. Δόξα might still remain active, alerting feebly to the possibility of an alternative vital orientation, but it will not be in a position to actively and effectively contest the reign of ἐπιθυμία. The prevalence of δόξα, on the other hand, will result in an at least temporary weakening of the innate grip of ἐπιθυμία, but never in its complete annihilation.

The prevalence of ἐπιθυμία is designated as ὕβρις, while σωφροσύνη occurs when δόξα prevails (237e2ff.)[191]. Like ὕβρις and ὁμόνοια, these terms also have political connotations. The term σωφροσύνη is a fundamental concept of ancient Greek ethical thought, and has clear political overtones[192]. The term ὕβρις, on the other hand, has a

[191] "δόξης μὲν οὖν ἐπὶ τὸ ἄριστον λόγῳ ἀγούσης καὶ κρατούσης τῷ κράτει σωφροσύνη ὄνομα· ἐπιθυμίας δὲ ἀλόγως ἐλκούσης ἐπὶ ἡδονὰς καὶ ἀρξάσης ἐν ἡμῖν τῇ ἀρχῇ ὕβρις ἐπωνομάσθη."

[192] On the notion of σωφροσύνη, see: SHEPPARD, J. T., The Heroic Sophrosyne and the Form of Homer's Poetry, *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 40 (1920), 47-67; KOLLMANN, A., Sophrosyne, *Wiener Studien* 59 (1941), 12-34; DE VRIES, G. J., Σωφροσύνη en grec classique, *Mnemosyne* 11 (1943), 81-101; NORTH, H. F., A period of opposition to sophrosyne in Greek thought, *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 78 (1947), 1-17; LARSON, C. W. R., The Platonic synonyms, δικαιοσύνη and σωφροσύνη, *American Journal of Philology* 72 (1951), 395-414; WEBSTER, T. B. L., Sophocles and the Antigone, *Proceedings of the African Classical Association* 1 (1958), 28-32; BOULTER, P. N., Sophia and sophrosyne in Euripides' Andromache, *Phoenix* 20 (1966), 51-58; NORTH, H. F., *Sophrosyne*. Self-Knowledge and Self-Restraint in Greek literature, Ithaca, N. Y., Cornell University Press, 1966; HERTER, H., *Selbsterkenntnis der Sophrosyne*. Zu Platons Charmides, ABLEITINGER, d. VON, HEIDELBERG, H. (ed.), Festschrift Karl Vretska zum 70. Geburtstag überreicht von seinem Freunden und Schülern, Winter, 1970, 74-88; DOVER, K. J., *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle*, Indianapolis, Cambridge, Hackett, 1974, 57, 59, 66-69, 103, 116, 119, 121; EISENBERG, P., Sophrosune, self, and state. A partial defense of Plato, *Apeiron* 9 (1975), 31-36; ADKINS, A. W. H., Polu pragmosune and "Minding One's Own Business": A Study in Greek Social and Political Values, *Classical Philology* 71 (1976), 301-327; NORTH, H. F., The mare, the vixen, and the bee. Sophrosyne as the virtue of women in antiquity, *Illinois Classical Studies* 2 (1977), 35-48; SCHÖPSDAU, K., Tapferkeit, Aidos und Sophrosyne im ersten Buch der platonischen Nomoi, *Rheinisches Museum* 131 (1986), 97-123; LOUCAS, I., Aux origines de la cité-État. Sophrosyné sociale et politique religieuse nationale, avec une référence spéciale à Athènes, *Kernos* 1 (1988), 141-150; WILSON, J. R., Sophrosyne in Thucydides, *Ancient History Bulletin* 4 (1990), 51-57; COOLIDGE, F. P., The relation of philosophy to sophrosune: Zalmoxian medicine in Plato's Charmides, *Ancient Philosophy* 13 (1993), 23-36; WHITEHEAD, D., Cardinal virtues: the language of public approbation in democratic Athens, *Classica et Medievalia* 44 (1993), 37-75; CARONE, G. R., Socrates' human wisdom and sophrosune in Charmides 164 C ff., *Ancient Philosophy* 18 (1998), 267-286; SCHILTZ, E. A., *"Sôphrosunê" and "mania": the rise and study of moral psychology*, diss. Duke University, 2000; VORWERK, M., Plato on Virtue: Definitions of ΣΩΦΡΟΣΥΝΗ in Plato's Charmides and in Plotinus Enneads 1.2 (19), *American Journal of Philology* 122 (2001), 29-47; HUMBLE, N. M., Σωφροσύνη revisited: was it ever a Spartan virtue ?, in: POWELL, A., HODKINSON, S. (ed.), *Sparta: beyond the mirage*, London, Classical Press of Wales, 2002, 85-109; PICHANICK, A., Two rival conceptions of sophrosune, *Polis: The Journal of Ancient Greek Political Thought* 22 (2005), 249-264;

complicated history as a religious, ethical, but also juridical term [193]. In this anthropological model, they are used as labels for starkly contrasting existential situations. The choice of terms is not innocent: ὕβρις has a clear negative connotation, while σωφροσύνη is for the most part a quality to be praised in the context of ancient Greek culture. The term σωφροσύνη, as used in this speech, immediately reminds us of a fundamental aspect of ancient Greek mainstream ethical thought. In fact, this is an aspect that is already invoked by the fact that the anthropological model present in this speech

RADEMAKER, A. M., *"Sophrosyne" and the rhetoric of self-restraint*: polysemy & persuasive use of an ancient Greek value term, Leiden, Boston (Mass.), Brill, 2005; EISENSTADT, M., Critias' Definitions of ΣΩΦΡΟΣΥΝΗ in Plato's "Charmides", *Hermes* 136 (2008), 492-495; MUELLER, M., Phaedra's *Defixio*: Scripting *Sophrosune* in Euripides' *Hippolytus*, *Classical Antiquity* 30 (2011), 148-177

[193] On the complex and multifacted notion of ὕβρις, see: GERNET, L., *Recherches sur le développement de la pensée juridique et morale en Grèce*. Étude sémantique, Paris, Leroux, 1917, reed. Paris, Albin Michel, 2001, 17ff., 191ff., 389ff.; GRANDE, C. del, *Hybris*. Colpa e castigo nell' espressione poetica e letteraria degli scrittori della Grecia antica da Omero a Cleante, Napoli, Ricciardi, 1947; MAYOR, D., La hybris en el estásimo II de Edipo Rey, *Humanidades* 7 (1955), 94-106; ROBERTSON, H. G., The hybristes in Homer, *Classical Journal* 51 (1955), 81-83; ROBERTSON, H. G., The hybristes in Aeschylus, *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 98 (1967), 373- 382; STOIANOVICI, L., La notion d'hybris dans l'Iliade, *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 16 (1968), 81-88; DOVER, *op. cit.*, 54f., 110f., 147, 207 n. 5; HOOKER, J. T., The original meaning of ὕβρις, *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 19 (1975), 125-137; DIRAT, M., *L'hybris dans la tragédie grecque*, Lille, Service de reproduction des thèses, 1973; MCDOWELL, D., 'Hybris' in Athens, *Greece & Rome* 23 (1976), 14-31; FISHER, N. R. E., 'Hybris' and Dishonour: I, *Greece & Rome* 23 (1976), 177-193; MICHELINI, A. N., ΄Υβρις and plants, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 82 (1978), 35-44; FISHER, N. R. E., 'Hybris' and Dishonour: II, *Greece & Rome* 26 (1979), 32-47; GAGARIN, M., The Athenian law against hybris, in: BOWERSOCK, G. W., BURKERT, W., PUTNAM, C. J. (ed.), *Arktouros*. Hellenic studies presented to Bernard M. W. Knox on the occasion of his 65th birthday, Berlin, de Gruyter, 1979, 229-236; CANTARELLA, E., Spunti di riflessione critica su ὕβρις e τιμή in Omero, in: DIMAKIS, P. D., *Symposion 1979*. Actes du IV[e] Colloque international de droit grec et hellénistique (Égine, 3-7 Septembre 1979), Athènes, 1981, 83-96; SCODEL, R, Hybris in the second stasimon of the Oedipus Rex, *Classical Philology* 77 (1982), 214-223; DICKIE, M. W., Hêsychia and hybris in Pindar, in: GERBER, D. E. (ed.), *Greek poetry and philosophy*. Studies in honour of Leonard Woodbury, Chico, CA, Scholars Press, 1984, 83-109; FISHER, N. R. E., La legge sulla hybris ad Atene, *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli, Dipartimento di Studi del Mondo Classico e del Mediterraneo Antico, Sezione di Archeologia e Storia Antica* 9 (1987), 99-115; MURRAY, O., La legge soloniana sulla hybris, *ibidem*, 117-125; COHEN, D., Sexuality, Violence, and the Athenian Law of 'Hubris', *Greece & Rome* 38 (1991), 171-188; FISHER, N. R. E., *Hybris, a Study in the Values of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greece*, Duck & Phillips, Warminster, 1992; GARVIE, A., L'hybris, particulièrement chez Ajax, in: MACHIN, A., PERNÉE, L. (ed.), *Sophocle* : le texte, les personnages : actes du colloque international d'Aix-en-Provence, 10, 11 et 12 janvier 1992, Aix-en-Provence, Publ. de l'Université de Provence, 1993, 243-253; ROWE, G. O., The many facets of hybris in Demosthenes' Against Meidias, *American Journal of Philology* 114 (1993), 397-406; COHEN, D., *Law, violence and community in classical Athens*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, 147-51, 155-6; CAIRNS, D., Hybris, Dishonour and Thinking Big, *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 116 (1996), 1-32; FISHER (2000), 83-123; ZAKRAVSKY, C., Polis und Hybris : der verworfene Glanz des Alkibiades, in PIRCHER, W., TREML, M. (ed.), *Tyrannis und Verführung*, Wien, Turia und Kant, 2000, 71-87; MATHIEU, J.-M., Hybris-démesure ? : philologie et traduction, *Kentron* 20 (2004), 15-45; FISHER, N. R. E., Body-abuse: the rhetoric of hybris in Aeschines' "Against Timarchos", in: BERTRAND, J.-M. (ed.), *La violence dans les mondes grec et romain*: actes du colloque international (Paris, 2-4 mai 2002), Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, 2005, 67-89; STAFFORD, E. J., "Nemesis", "hybris" and violence, in: BERTRAND, J.-M., La violence dans les mondes grec et romain : actes du colloque international (Paris, 2-4 mai 2002), Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, 2005, 195-212; MOORE, K. R., Erôs, hybris and mania: love and desire in Plato's «Laws» and beyond, *Polis: The Journal of Ancient Greek Political Thought* 24 (2007) 24, 112-133.

is fundamentally characterised by conflict. What the αἰμύλος is invoking is the idea that human nature is the seat of a permanent conflict between unruly desires and the ability to tame them. As we have seen in the previous chapter, being master of oneself is an integral and fundamental aspect of civic dignity. The ideal of the fully developed grown man, of the man that is perfectly integrated in and is a valuable member of the πόλις, in other words, the ideal of what a citizen should be is intrinsically connected with this ability to master one's desires. What is at stake here is akin to the opposition between ἀκρασία and ἐγκράτεια, between being at the mercy of one's urges, and, on the contrary, being the master. In the context of an anthropological model that consists of the opposition between an innate and an acquired principle, no one is born σῶφρων. Some will acquire σωφροσύνη. No one, however, will have σωφροσύνη thrust upon them – since in order to become σῶφρων one needs to make the effort and have the ability to control one's innate desires. The term ὕβρις, on the other hand, is at all times associated with folly, blasphemy, outrage against the gods and one's fellow man. By simply calling the prevalence of ἐπιθυμία ὕβρις, the speaker is showing to the boy that it is something to be shunned. By simply calling the prevalence of δόξα σωφροσύνη, he is giving this particular principle of vital orientation a very strong endorsement. The anthropological model presented in this speech is not neutral. It is not just a mere description of a phenomenon or state of affairs. Rather, it contains in the terminology itself a specific "ethical" programme, as well as a not so subtle nudge towards the desired outcome.

This complex and intricate anthropological model leads to a rather long and convoluted definition of ἔρως (238b6ff.). We will not go into the details and problems surrounding the text of this definition: it suffices to say that it appears as a mock-solemn and bombastic conclusion to a section of a speech characterised by its "pseudo-technical" tone and vocabulary[194]. In a text that supposedly aims at rigour and clarity, this is a definition that is confusing in its complexity and its attempt to be exhaustive. There are, however, a few aspects of this definition that we must stress. As we have seen before,

[194] "ἡ γὰρ ἄνευ λόγου δόξης ἐπὶ τὸ ὀρθὸν ὁρμώσης κρατήσασα ἐπιθυμία πρὸς ἡδονὴν ἀχθεῖσα κάλλους, καὶ ὑπὸ αὖ τῶν ἑαυτῆς συγγενῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν ἐπὶ σωμάτων κάλλος ἐρρωμένως ῥωσθεῖσα νικήσασα ἀγωγῇ, ἀπ᾽ αὐτῆς τῆς ῥώμης ἐπωνυμίαν λαβοῦσα, ἔρως ἐκλήθη." Note the "ἐρρωμένως ῥωσθεῖσα" pun. On the difficulties related to the "sesquipedalian loquasciousness" of this definition, see: AST, *ad locum*; BEKKER, I. (ed.), *Platonis et quae vel Platonis esse feruntur*, vol. 1, London, Priestley, 1826, *ad locum*; STALLBAUM, *ad locum*; THOMPSON, *ad locum*; RITTER, 117-118, n. 32; MORESCHINI, C., Note critiche al Fedro di Platone, *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Classe di Lettere e Filosofia* 34 (1965), 422-432, *ad locum*; DE VRIES, *ad locum*; ROWE, *ad locum*; SALA, *ad locum*; YUNIS, *ad locum*.

ἐπιθυμία includes many subspecies. *A fortiori*, ὕβρις, as the state defined by the prevalence of ἐπιθυμία, will assume as many different configurations as there are different kinds of ἐπιθυμία. Ἔρως is one of these forms of ὕβρις, one among many. The final definition of ἔρως, therefore, puts it in very bad company. It is defined as the triumphant presence of a particular species of ἐπιθυμία: the ἐπιθυμία that leads towards bodily beauty. It is worth noting to once again that what defines ἔρως as such is not simply the desire for beautiful boys. A desire for beautiful boys tempered, moderated and guided by δόξα would not be an instance of ὕβρις. The difference between these two situations lies in which principle exercises supremacy. Under the regency of ἐπιθυμία, there will be nothing to moderate ἔρως. On the contrary, the reign of ἐπιθυμία is fertile in all different sorts of ὕβρις, all sorts of unrestrained and uncontrolled desires. The different kinds of ὕβρις will limit and influence each other. In the long and convoluted definition of ἔρως, they are even presented as συγγενεῖς, kin, and as working together with and reinforcing the prevailing desire. The specific ἐπιθυμία called ἔρως, therefore, will be, so to speak, at the head of an unruly and ferocious mob, and will take control of the ἐραστής' life – in other words, ἔρως will execute a *coup d'état* and become a tyrant[195]. What consequences the reign of ἔρως will have (i.e., the ὠφέλεια or βλάβη) for the χαριζομένῳ, the ἐρώμενος that yields to a person controlled by this kind of ὕβρις (238e1), is what we will analyse in our next section.

[195] Tyranny, ἔρως and ὕβρις are heavily connected both in tradition and in *corpus Platonicum.* The connection between ὕβρις and tyranny is old and proverbial: Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 873: Ὕβρις φυτεύει τύραννον. Note, however, Dawe's (Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*, Cambridge, 1982, 182-183) alternative reading, endorsed by Parker (*op. cit.*, 161): Ὕβριν φυτεύει τυραννίς. On the association between ὕβρις and tyranny in archaic and classical Greek political theory see SCODEL, R., Hybris in the Second Stasimon of the Oedipus Rex, *Classical Philology* 77 (1982), 214-223, especially 216-218. The unrestrained power of the tyrant allows him to indulge in whatever desires he might have; or, alternatively, the assumption of supreme power is a manifestation of a dangerous lack of self-restraint. On the connection between ὕβρις and ἔρως, especially in its sexual component, see: MCDOWELL (*op. cit.*), 17, 21 and 25; FISHER, Hybris and Dishonour: I, 186-187. This association is also present *Laws* 837c1ff. Finally, the connection between ἔρως and tyranny has an important literary tradition in the τόπος of ἔρως τύραννος. See chapter II, p. 134ff. This receives an extensive treatment in *Republic* 573b5ff, where the prospective tyrant's soul is presented as being guided by Ἔρως τύραννος ἔνδον οἰκῶν (537d3-4). The definition of ἔρως in Socrates' first speech (238b7-c4) is reminiscent of the process that leads the man dominated by ἔρως to become a tyrant in *Republic* IX. The image that is drawn is not unlike that of a furious mob storming the ruler's palace and assuming the reins of the government – a mob led by ἔρως, but composed of a multitude of other desires. See ROSE, S., The Role of Eros is Plato's Republic, *Review of Metaphysics* 18 (1965), 452-475; SCOTT, D., Eros, Philosophy, and Tyranny, in SCOTT, D. (ed.), *Maieusis: Essays in Ancient Philosophy in Honour of Myles Burnyeat.* Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, 136-153.

2.4. Ἔρως as ὕβρις and νόσος: the lover's relationship with the beloved

If the first part of the speech delineated an anthropological model, the second part will draw conclusions from that same model. In other words, whereas the first part of the speech dealt with the matter of the τι, the second part will deal with the ποῖον τι. In the second part of his speech, Socrates will apply the principles established in the first. This means that the description of the effects of ἔρως, sc. its "ὠφέλεια ἢ βλάβη" (238e1), will be derived from the understanding of ἔρως arrived at in the first part of the speech. Unlike Lysias, Socrates is following a methodical plan. In this respect, Socrates' first speech is a caricature of "technical" discourse: it makes deductions about its subject matter from a set of basic principles. By following a methodical, systematic plan, Socrates' speech can claim to be not only exhaustive, giving the impression of covering all the necessary points, but also organised and well-structured. But this does not concern only the connection between the first and the second part of Socrates' speech. The structured nature of the speech also extends to the second part itself. The effects of ἔρως are also presented in a systematic way. It is, in this respect, the opposite of the hodgepodge nature of Lysias' speech.

What is most striking about the anthropological model presented in this speech is how it constitutes an inversion of the traditional model of the exogenous ἔρως, of ἔρως as an invasive force. Unlike Lysias' speech, where the exogenous model is present, albeit lurking in the shadows, in Socrates' speech we find a version of what we have designated as the endogenous model. In this model, ἔρως – and μανία – are the result of an internal inbalance, of the hypertrophy of one of the basic components of human nature, ἐπιθυμία. The model is clearly medical: the fact that one of the components, and, to be more precise, *this* specific component, predominates is the cause of a νόσος[196]. The ἐραστής is, by definition, ill. This νόσος is of such a nature as to force the affected person to desire and

[196] See, however, MCDOWELL (*op. cit.*, 21): "(…) hybris is always voluntary. No Greek ever speaks of a person being compelled to commit an act of hybris, and we may infer that it would be self-contradictory to say that.' Hybris means doing what one feels like doing, free from constraint, whether by other people or by oneself." This seems to contradict the conception of ἔρως as νόσος, which is a form of constraint, not voluntary. The αἰμύλος seems to mix different popular conceptions of ἔρως – as ὕβρις, as tyranny, as a form of ἀνάγκη, as νόσος – while apparently paying little attention to the possible inconsistencies between them. This might be an intentional inconsistency, yet another subtle hint of the less than knowledgeable character of the αἰμύλος and his pseudotechnical pretentions. But it might also be an effect of the mixing of political and medical metaphors and models. In this case, ἔρως might be a disease, but it is also the entity that takes over the ἐραστής' life, and assumes control. There is ὕβρις, then, but the ὑβριστής is the tyrant ἔρως itself. For the notion of ὕβρις as excess of vital energy, excess of desires: see MCDOWELL, *op. cit.*, 15-16; CAIRNS, D., *op. cit.*, especially 22ff.

do everything to obtain what he wants. In this respect, the lover will be enslaved by ἔρως, in the same way a serious disease dominates and controls the life of the person affected by it. The life of the lover is wholly defined by the presence of this diseased desire; all his actions aim towards the object of this desire; his behaviour towards the object itself will at all times be directed by the peculiar nature of this kind of desire. The conception of νόσος at stake in this speech is the medical conception, not the "religious" one. This νόσος is not the work of a god or an evil spirit, but rather the effect of something gone wrong within. The predominance of this specific desire is itself ὕβρις – excess[197]. However, the metaphors used in this medical understanding of ἔρως, and, by extension, μανία, are political. What we are dealing with is, in fact, a model that mixes medical and political understanding: a medical model that uses political metaphors, and, at the same time, a political model used to explain a phenomenon that is understood as a disease.

The understanding of ἔρως as νόσος intersects with the image of ἔρως τύραννος. As we have seen, the erotic νόσος is described in terms of a *coup d'état*: ἔρως takes power with the help of other kinds of ἐπιθυμία. It becomes a tyrant, in the first instance exercising its tyranny over the ἐραστής (238e3ff.). The tyranny of ἔρως manifests itself by the destruction of σωφροσύνη in the lover and by the exercise of absolute control over him. This, of course, does not necessarily mean that δόξα ceases to be present in the lover; it is still there. Yet, it is so overwhelmed by erotic desire, that it is hardly noticeable. The lover is unable to exercise any control over himself; he is the slave of ἔρως. The consequence of the tyranny of ἔρως is the annulment of the ἐραστής' identity. He becomes nothing more than what ἔρως has made of him: an ἐραστής. His identity is replaced by the determination introduced by the reign of ἔρως. He becomes a vessel of ἔρως, the seat of a diseased desire, and the servant of a tyrant. He is reduced to the tension that belongs to ἔρως. The effects of the tyranny of ἔρως over the ἐραστής are not described directly in the speech. Since the rhetorical purpose of the speech is to convince the ἐρώμενος not to accept the advances of an ἐραστής, but rather to choose the αἰμύλος instead, the speech immediately jumps into the description of the effects of ἔρως on the ἐρώμενος. But

[197] It is important to distinguish between two notions of ἔρως in this speech. On the one hand, ἔρως is the name of a specific kind of desire, apparently akin to sexual desire. On the other hand, ἔρως is a specific kind of ὕβρις, i.e., a specific form of preponderance of ἐπιθυμία over δόξα. Understood as sexual desire, ἔρως is not necessarily absent from a life of σωφροσύνη. A life of σωφροσύνη will also include different forms of ἐπιθυμία – but it would not be ruled by any of them. The notion of ἔρως that will be the object of ψόγος in this speech is not the ἐπιθυμία *simpliciter*, as SINAIKO's scheme (p. 43) seems to suggest, but a specific subtype of ὕβρις – a ἐπιθυμία that presides over a regime of ὕβρις.

because ἔρως only acts on the ἐρώμενος indirectly, through the ἐραστής, we can see them reflected in his actions, in the way he behaves towards the ἐρώμενος[198]. The actions of ἔρως we are invited to witness are the ones directed externally, towards the ἐρώμενος. The tyranny of ἔρως becomes more than just an internal authoritarian regime – it becomes expansionist, imperialist, directing its aggressiveness towards the object of this peculiar form of desire, the ἐρώμενος[199].

This view of ἔρως as both a νόσος and a tyrant will be extensively explored in the second part of the speech. The effects of ἔρως on the ἐρώμενος are deduced from this understanding of the phenomenon. This deduction obeys two principles. The first is the inacceptability of any resistance. The erotic νόσος, the tyrant ἔρως cannot tolerate opposition of any kind in the pursuit of its goal – the χαρίζεσθαι (238e4f.)[200]. This requires the elimination of any form of resistance not only within the ἐραστής, but also outside: in the wider world, and especially, in the person of the ἐρώμενος himself. The tyranny that ἔρως exercises over the lover becomes a tyranny of the lover over the beloved, or, to be more precise, of ἔρως over the beloved, through the acts and behaviour of the entirely subdued lover. The second principle is more discreet, but still plays an important role: πλεονεξία. After ἔρως has encroached itself in a position of power within the ἐραστής, it cannot be satisfied by a one-night stand, or a limited contact with the ἐρώμενος. On the contrary, the tyrant ἔρως wants more and more. It is a form of desire that spreads, expands and dominates the totality not only of the ἐραστής' life, but also, if it is ultimately successful, the ἐρώμενος'. To use a modern medical metaphor, ἔρως is like a cancer that spreads and metastisizes. To use a modern political metaphor, ἔρως installs a totalitarian and imperialist regime.

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[198] On the other hand the effects of ἔρως on the ἐραστής are also portrayed, by contrast, in the radical change that results when the tyranny of ἔρως subsides (240e7ff.).

[199] What we find here is a curious various on the traditional model of ἔρως as an invasive force. In the traditional model, ἔρως comes from without, as if it were being emanated from the person that inspires it. In other words, ἔρως "resides" in the ἐρώμενος, not as a power that controls him, but as a property that turns the ἐρώμενος into a pole of attraction, so to speak. From that location, ἔρως invades someone, turning him into an ἐραστής – someone who is in love with someone else, which is to say, someone who is under the yoke of the invasive power that is ἔρως. In the model delineated in this speech, ἔρως starts by residing within the ἐραστής, as a form of disease or internal inbalance. Its first deleterious effects are within the ἐραστής himself. But the same imperialist and expansionist logic applies, albeit in the opposite direction and in a different way. This is a force that emerges from within the ἐραστής to invade and colonise the life of the ἐρώμενος, not by making the ἐρώμενος "fall in love", as we would say, but by subjecting him to the ill treatment described in the speech. In Socrates' speech, from the point of view of the ἐραστής, ἔρως is not an invasive force; but it is so from the point of view of the ἐρώμενος – and without any of the superficial charm usually associated with the invasion of ἔρως in the traditional sense.

[200] "νοσοῦντι δὲ πᾶν ἡδὺ τὸ μὴ ἀντιτεῖνον, κρεῖττον δὲ καὶ ἴσον ἐχθρόν."

It is from these two principles, intolerance of resistance and πλεονεξία, that the effects of ἔρως on the beloved are to be deduced. As the ἐραστής was reduced to his identity and role as ἐραστής, the vessel and instrument of ἔρως, by its overwhelming tyrannical power, so the ἐρώμενος' identity will be reduced to the object of this peculiar ἐπιθυμία. The project of ἔρως for the ἐρώμενος is to reduce him simply into what ἔρως wants from him, to something that is proportional, that fits perfectly into what ἔρως wants. That is to say that ἔρως is the bearer of a specific perspective on the ἐρώμενος, a perspective that understands the ἐρώμενος as the mere point of application of the desiderative tension. That the identity of the person that happens to be the ἐρώμενος is not limited to and is not exhausted by his role as ἐρώμενος will be at conflict with the intolerance to resistance and the πλεονεξία that characterises ἔρως. Everything that exceeds the narrow perspective ἔρως has of the ἐρώμενος as ἐρώμενος will be seen either as superfluous, or, more seriously, as a potential source of resistance, as a threat to the totalitarian and imperialist project. Faced with the fact that the ἐρώμενος is more than just an ἐρώμενος, the diseased and enslaved ἐραστής will try to cut off everything that, from the point of view of ἔρως, is in excess. In his project to reduce the ἐρώμενος to the proportions demanded by the obsessive and monomaniacal attachment that is ἔρως, the ἐραστής will do everything in his power to curtail and eliminate any of the ἐρώμενος' predicates that might cause him to resist the ἐραστής' advances, or compete in any way with him. Any positive predicates will be the object of ill-will, φθόνος, from the ἐραστής (239a5ff.). Unlike the existential project of conventional παιδεραστία, or, to be more precise, the existential project the conventional discourse of παιδεραστία assigns to it, the existential project at stake in Socrates' first speech is not at all beneficient towards the ἐρώμενος, but quite the opposite.

A large portion of Socrates' first speech is therefore dedicated to cataloguing the harmful effects of the lover's interference on the beloved's life. As with Lysias' speech, the intention is to persuade the beloved of the unsuitability of the speaker's rivals. As with Lysias' speech, the speaker invokes the beloved's self-interest by showing how a lover will, in fact, bring harm to his life. Unlike Lysias' speech, however, Socrates' first speech catalogues these harmful effects by following a structure that is logical and easy to understand. Instead of just adding effect to effect without any special order, Socrates chooses to organize his catalogue in sections. These sections are: 1) effects on the ψυχή (239a3-239c1), 2) effects on the beloved's body (239c2-239d5), 3) effects on what you

can, for now, designate as exterior goods (239d6-240a7). This organisation has a serious purpose: it shows that he is covering the totality of the subject matter in an orderly fashion – from what is most central, closest to one's self, to what is most distant.

We can find a parallel for this neat organization elsewhere in the *corpus platonicum*, namely in the *Alcibiades Maior*. One of the main issues dealt with in this dialogue concerns the notion of ἐπιμέλεια ἑαυτοῦ, care for oneself (127e8). In their attempt to understand what exactly this means, Socrates and Alcibiades are cast into the complex issues regarding the understanding of what exactly one's self is. By following the ordinary current usage of this phrase, they find themselves in a quagmire of confusion and uncertainty regarding not only the meaning of the phrase, but also what one's self actually is. Socrates soon concludes that is necessary to follow the Delphic inscription in order to understand what this ἐπιμέλεια might be and what it is ἐπιμέλεια of – αὐτός (129a-b3). Having established that it is one's ψυχή, and not one's body or a combination of soul and body that corresponds to one's αὐτός (130c1-3), Socrates and Alcibiades go on to discuss how this relates to one's body and to one's possessions. Socrates distinguishes αὐτός from τὰ αὐτοῦ, the body (131a1-2), and these from what belongs to the body, τὰ τῶν ἑαυτοῦ (131b1; 131c1). This creates a scale of proximity and distance from one's self through which all that relates to one's self might be organized. On the first stage, we find everything that is directly related to one's ψυχή, namely knowledge, courage and all the other ἀρεταί. On the second stage, we find the body and everything related to the body, e.g., one's health and strenght. On the third stage, everything that is external to that, for example, one's property.

The first speech of Socrates follows a similar organization. It systematically lists the different ways in which the lover will harm the beloved. This account goes through several stages, detailing the effects of the lover's interference in the beloved's psyche, soma and "external goods", like his family, friends, property, etc. The lover tries to submit the beloved completely, eliminating everything that can make the beloved able to resist the lover. By listing these harmful effects in such a systematic way, Socrates emphasizes how complete and overwhelming the harmful effects of the lover are in the beloved's life. This is a list that aims to be comprehensive and exhaustive and encompass the whole existence of the beloved. The beloved is then reduced to an object of desire in the strictest sense of the word, in a way that can be understood in analogy with the object of desire of the glutton. The lover consumes the beloved, for him the beloved is nothing more than

what he needs to fulfil his desire. The same way a hungry man will eat his meal thinking about nothing else but his own hunger and the way to sate it, the lover will use the beloved to fulfil his yearnings. The beloved is reduced to something the lover has to consume and, therefore, will not be allowed a life of his own. The lover will exercise all his power to limit the beloved to the role of something to be enjoyed by the lover. The lover will then do everything in his power to eliminate any possibility of resistance from the beloved by destroying everything that might empower him.

Instead of endeavouring to improve the beloved's ψυχή, the lover will try to make it as worse as possible. In this the behaviour of the ἐραστής will be the complete opposite of what would be expected in conventional παιδεραστία. As we have seen before, παιδεραστία claims for itself a fundamental educational role. Through the ἐραστής, the ἐρώμενος will acquire the knowledge necessary to complete his successful transition from childhood to adulthood, thereby becoming a full member of the citizen-body. By having a close relationship with someone who is already a full citizen, and, therefore, in possession of the knowledge and maturity required by the πόλις, the ἐρώμενος will improve himself, learn, mature, and grow into citizenship. The contrast with what we can find in Socrates' first speech could not be greater. In this speech, the ἐραστής, under the tyrannical yoke of ἔρως, will not suffer the ἐρώμενος to acquire the qualities required from a full citizen. The ἐραστής will try to keep the ἐρώμενος in a state of childlike arrested development. He will prefer him to be ignorant, cowardly and unintelligent and keep him away from φιλοσοφία[201]. He will achieve this by preventing the beloved from any opportunity of improvement through the company of those who would be able to make him a better person, since the ἐραστής himself, being μαινόμενος, is completely

[201] The meaning of this term is unclear at this stage of the dialogue. It is difficult to resist the temptation to read it as the Platonic notion of φιλοσοφία and as an anticipation of the palinode. But it is also likely that it is rather more related to the Isocratean notion of φιλοσοφία: BROWN AND COULTER (*op. cit.*) 411-412. For the unPlatonic meaning of φιλοσοφία in this passage, see DE VRIES, *ad locum*, YUNIS, *ad locum*. Opposing this view, ROWE, 153-154. On the Isocratean notion of φιλοσοφία, see BURK, A., *Die Pädagogik des Isokrates als Grundlegung des humanistischen Bildungsideals*, Würzburg, Becker, 1923, repr. N. Y., Johnson, 1968, 65ff.; MIKKOLA, E., *Isokrates*. Seine Anschauungen im lichte seiner Schriften, Helsinki, Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1954, 201ff.; RIES, K., *Isokrates und Platon im Ringen um die Philosophia*, Diss. München, 1959, *passim*; EUCKEN, C., *Isokrates*. Seine Positionen in der Auseinandersetzung mit den zeitgenössischen Philosophen, Berlin/.N.Y., de Gruyter, 1983, 14ff.; NIGHTINGALE, A. W., *Genres in Dialogue*: Plato and the construct of philosophy, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, 13-59; SCHIAPPA, E., *The Beginnings of Rhetorical Theory in Classical Greece*, New Haven (Conn.), Yale University Press, 1999, 168-184; LIVINGSTONE, N., Writing Politics. Isocrates' Rhetoric of Philosophy, *Rhetorica* 25 (2007), 15-34; TOO, Y.-L., A *Commentary on Isocrates' Antidosis*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, 23ff.; ALEXIOU, E., *Der Euagoras des Isokrates*, Berlin/N.Y., De Gruyter, 2010, 15, 100f.

unqualified to perform the educational tasks necessary to help the ἐρώμενος improve. The beloved will become intellectually stunted and incapable of offering any resistance to the lover (239b1ff.). But he will also lack the qualities the πόλις expects from its citizens, and be diminished in ability and dignity when compared with his fellow citizens[202].

The harmful effects on the body are listed next (239c2ff.). Once again, the speech strictly follows the principles we have mentioned above, and deduces from the definition of ἔρως consequences that might at first appear to be in contradiction with what would be expected. Thus, instead of desiring someone who is strong, healthy, full of life, the ἐραστής will prefer someone who is weak and inferior. Instead of preferring an ἐρώμενος that is fit and whose beauty results from exercise and what we would call a healthy lifestyle, the ἐραστής will prefer someone who does not engage in the games, training and exercise that was expected to be part of the life of the ἐρώμενος as idealised by conventional παιδεραστία. In other words, the physical predicates that the ἐραστής admires and desires, according to this speech, are very much at odds with the type of young man who was usually the object of desire in παιδεραστία. These same predicates are also completely opposed to what the πόλις values in its citizens, namely, the physical ability to fight in the battlefield. By wanting an ἐρώμενος that is physically unfit, and by endeavouring to make him so, the ἐραστής is making him worthless as a citizen. In this the speech follows the principle that states that ἔρως cannot tolerate any resistance, but it also becomes ever clearer that the existential project of this kind of relationship is not to benefit the ἐρώμενος, but rather the opposite: to make him weaker, inferior, completely at the mercy of the ἐραστής[203].

Following the same principles, the lover will also strive to deprive the beloved from any external goods that he might have (239e7). By external goods we are to understand not only money and any property one may have, but also, and especially, family and friends. In short, external goods refer to any good one may have that does not relate directly to the soul or the body. The speech emphasizes how ἐραστής will try to socially isolate the ἐρώμενος, in particular from his own family. Mother, father, relatives

[202] From what has been said so far in the speech, Socrates is able to deduce something quite stricking: that the effect of ἔρως is the exact opposite of everything that Phaedrus values the most. In other words, ἔρως is an obstacle to φιλοσοφία in the Isocratean, rhetorical sense. From the point of view of someone with the peculiar φιλολογία of Phaedrus, this is a superlatively negative result.

[203] In another virtuoso display of rhetorical skill, Socrates is able to turn a form of desire motivated by beauty into an instrument of its destruction. In other words, ἔρως is so deleterious that it destroys the thing itself that it desires the most. This is yet another superlatively negative trait assigned to ἔρως.

and friends, all these will the lover try to keep at arm's length. Not only may these people vie with the ἐραστής for the ἐρώμενος' attention, but they might even try to prevent the ἐραστής from spending time with the ἐρώμενος. They are, in short, both potential rivals (even if with different aims) and potential obstacles. For that reason, the ἐρώμενος has to be kept away from them, in the exclusive company and possession of the ἐραστής. The ἐρώμενος will also have to be deprived of his wealth and possessions, since these give him a material basis to make him independent of the lover, thereby allowing the ἐρώμενος to resist him. The ἐραστής will therefore want the boy poor and destitute, completely dependant and at the mercy of the ἐραστής. The situation of arrested development the ἐραστής wants the ἐρώμενος to stay in will lead the former to prevent the latter from marrying (ἄγαμον). Marriage not only creates another potential rival, the ἐρώμενος' wife, but it also entails duties and obligations that would compete with the heavy demands of the ἐραστής. Marriage, the ultimate sign of maturity in a society with these characteristics, is something the overbearing ἐραστής cannot in any way tolerate. As observed above, Socrates' point is that the lover wants the beloved to be frozen in a state of permanent immaturity, of perpetual adolescence.The lover will occupy the whole life of the beloved, exerting an absolute control, for as long as possible[204].

In short, Socrates portrays the lover as absolutely harmful in every way, shape or form. He goes even further than that: not only is the lover harmful, but there is no possible upside to being with him, not even pleasure (240a7ff.). Worse than not being pleasant, the company of the lover is overbearing and unbearable to the beloved. The beloved is his prisoner and has to endure the lover's constant solicitations. What follows (240c6ff.) in the speech is a blood-curdling description, from the point of view of the beloved, of the experience of being the victim of what we would nowadays call sexual harrassement[205]. The lover at all times demands more and more, and uses the beloved as a mere means of sexual fruition. From what should be a complete human being, a future

[204] Here Socrates does the same thing he did before, but regarding "external goods": ἔρως is a superlatively deleterious force to any of these goods. It becomes clear that Socrates is following a very organised, systematic and effective rhetorical strategy to produce the best possible kind of ψόγος. What Socrates does is produce a superlative combination of negative superlatives. Point by point, he stresses the worst possible aspects; in accumulation, the result is something superlatively negative, in all possible respects. The impression that this creates is that, in the end, the idea of ἔρως as anything even mildly positive is completely demolished, and does not have a leg left to stand on.

[205] The term ὕβρις has connotations of rape and sexual abuse. See: COLE, S. Greek Sanctions against Sexual Assault, *Classical Philology* 84, 97-113, especially 99. See also DOVER, K., *Greek Popular Morality*, 54 and 147, where ὕβρις is defined as treating a citizen as one would treat a slave or a foreigner, i.e., without respecting his civic dignity. This is consistent with how the lover treats the beloved.

citizen, with all the rights, dignities and expectations inherent to that status, the beloved is reduced to a situation of sexual slavery and compulsion, as the prisoner of the lover's desire. This unfortunate situation eloquently illustrates one of the fundamental features of ancient παιδεραστία by casting it in the worst possible light. The fact that παιδεραστία is thought of as an asymmetrical relationship, sc. the ἐραστής is the only one who is affected by ἔρως, whereas the ἐρώμενος remains sober, is a potential source of tension and anxiety. As we have mentioned before, the fact that the ἐρώμενος is not in love with the ἐραστής means that there is need for a motive to grant one's favours other than love and sexual desire. The educational project παιδεραστία claims to be the bearer of, and the φιλία and gratitude from the ἐρώμενος such benefit entails is supposed to constitute that motivation. According to the conventions of παιδεραστία, the ἐρώμενος was supposed to soberly grant his sexual favours, enduring calmly and with quiet detachment the pleasures of his ἐραστής.

What Socrates' first speech does at this stage is question this assumption and imagine the situation from the ἐρώμενος' point of view, with the purpose of showing how yielding to an ἐραστής is not only superlatively disadvantageous in every possible respect, but is also superlatively disagreeable. By doing this, he explores an important aspect of the cultural background: the assymetric nature of παιδεραστία. By this we mean the circumstance that the ἐρώμενος is not himself in love with the ἐραστής, nor is he expected or supposed to be. In other words, παιδεραστία does not require erotic reciprocity – it requires consent. The result is very different from the idealised version παιδεραστία seems to proclaim. To be engaged in sexual acts without desire or pleasure, regardless of how passively, patiently and submissively one endures it, is, at best, an uncomfortable situation, and, at worst, a terrible ordeal. Socrates' description, as would be expected in a ψόγος, emphasizes the disagreeable aspects of the situation by insisting on the ἐραστής' age, his ugliness, and, above all else, his overbearing and stifling presence, his constant looks and touches, his permanent and incessant urge to satisfy his desire. From the point of view of the ἐρώμενος, the ἐραστής is repugnant in every possible way – and there is no escaping him. And all of this is portrayed from the point of view of someone who does not share that desire in the slightest. It is the portrayal of μανία (or, to be more precise, of ἔρως as μανία) seen from the eyes of someone who is not μαινόμενος. But the ἐρώμενος is not just someone who happens not to share the ἐραστής' μανία: he is the very object of the ἐραστής' mad desire. The perplexity, incomprehension and aversion μανία usually

provokes in those who are not μαινόμενοι become even greater. The ἐρώμενος sees himself now as the object of a desire that is beyond his understanding. But the situation of the ἐρώμενος is even worse. He is in the hands of the μαινόμενος that desires him, at his mercy, being used for his pleasure, completely powerless and defenceless. This nightmarish situation is the result of the process that leads to the complete powerlessness and hopelessness of an ἐρώμενος deprived of all ability to resist. He is now reduced to what the ἐραστής has made of him – the mere correlate of his ἐπιθυμία.

It goes without saying it would be difficult to find any resemblance between the lover of Socrates' first speech and the ἐραστής as he is understood within ancient Greek παιδεραστία. Παιδεραστία is, by its own terms, a project with educational purposes that ultimately aims at the benefit and full development of the ἐρώμενος, the pleasure and happiness derived from it by the ἐραστής notwithstanding. As such, it presents itself as an advantage to the life of the beloved, who will therefore have the opportunity to learn from his lover and become a good and respectable citizen aided by his teachings. It is not surprising that this rosy perspective regarding παιδεραστία might be the object of some doubt and even rejection by some. Since it is the lover's interest that the boy accepts to grant his favours, it is natural that his case be presented in a somewhat better light. In these circumstances, it is natural that third parties might view the arguments in favour of παιδεραστία with some suspicion, and even as a clever attempt to just take from the boy what the lover wants, without giving anything really valuable in return. The suspicion regarding παιδεραστία seems to have followed it everywhere and, at least up to a point, motivated the discourse defending its beneficial role in the boy's life.

What we find in Socrates' first speech, however, is an extreme version of an anti-παιδεραστία discourse. Socrates goes further than just putting the ostensible benefits of a lover in question. He vehemently asserts the harmful nature of παιδεραστία and supports this assertion with a definition of ἔρως that shows it to be an unambiguously harmful form of ἐπιθυμία, a desire for boys gone wild. The harmful nature of ἔρως lies in its nature as a form of ὑβρις. By emphasizing the utterly destructive, but also completely unpleasant nature of ἔρως and the ἐραστής, Socrates' first speech takes its role as a ψόγος to the extreme. It emphasizes every negative feature, and silences every conceivable positive one. He produces a speech that exposes the superlative nature of the βλάβη brought forth by ἔρως. By doing this he produces, in a virtuoso display of epideictic prowess, a superlative ψόγος, an indictement of the absolute evil that ἔρως is supposed to be.

Lysias had shown that the lover cannot fulfil the pederastic project because he is affected by a disease that renders him μαινόμενος, i.e., deprived of φρονεῖν, and had proposed a form of παιδεραστία without ἔρως, i.e., a sober παιδεραστία, which, while keeping the sexual component, does not feature the passionate aspects present in usual παιδεραστία. But Socrates overtakes Lysias also in this regard: by demonstrating that the whole pederastic project collapses not on account of the incompatibility between the lack of φρονεῖν of the ἐραστής and the peculiar demands of this project, but rather because the ἐραστής has no intention of helping the ἐρώμενος in any way – he just wants to consume him. Whereas Lysias' rhetorical strategy consists in showing how the educational project that is at the heart of the official discourse of παιδεραστία is in fact incompatible with the presence of ἔρως, Socrates' rhetorical strategy seems to be, strangely, a lot cruder. He picks up the points the ἐραστής presents in his own favour and simply inverts them, turning them against him. If the ἐραστής says that he will make the beloved braver, the speaker of Socrates' first speech will say that a lover would rather have him be a coward. If the ἐραστής says that he will transmit to his beloved useful and valuable knowledge, the speaker will say that he will keep the beloved away from φιλοσοφία. If the ἐραστής admires the boy's beauty and strength, the speaker will say that, in fact, he will be turned into a weakling. If the ἐραστής claims he will do everything to benefit the ἐρώμενος, the speaker will say the result will be the complete opposite. If the ἐραστής claims the beloved will find his company agreeable, the speaker describes said company in the most horrible terms possible. By following this rhetorical strategy, Socrates is building a ψόγος in the classical way: by operating a plausible inversion of the positive predicates of the subject matter, taken to a superlative degree.

What we have considered so far would be enough to fulfil to terms of the contract celebrated between Socrates and Phaedrus. It already corresponds to a superlative ψόγος of ἔρως. But Socrates goes even further than that by showing that ἔρως, albeit transient in its presence, is not transient in its deleterious effects. The kind of evil ἔρως is leaves behind itself a trail of destruction. Its effects reverberate even after the invasion is over. The ἐρώμενος' torment outlasts the onslaught of ἐραστής. The lover might want the beloved and do everything to keep him in his grasp, but a time will come when that desire will cease. The way this is formulated in Socrates' speech suggests that this transition will lead towards νοῦς and σωφροσύνη (240e7ff.). Love is a disease from which the lover will eventually be cured, a μανία that will be replaced by sanity and lucidity. What

Socrates' speech does not mention, however, is that the radical change in behaviour described may not necessarily be caused by a return to lucidity. In the anthropological model of Socrates' first speech there is more than a binary alternative between erotic madness and lucidity; there are rather different forms of madness between which one may be forced to alternate. The same effects could result from a mere change in the object of obsessive erotic desire, or from a change in the specific kind of ἐπιθυμία that dominates the former ἐραστής. When that happens, the change in his behaviour will be radical. The description of the changes that result from falling out of love is almost as extreme as the description of the lover when he is in love. He will no longer chase the beloved in an attempt to spend as much time with him as possible; he will no longer do everything to have him and keep him; he will no longer spend his life in permanent fruition of the beloved's company. The being that before was the object of all his desire will have lost its appeal.

As the rule of ἔρως finishes, a radical change in the identity of the ἐραστής takes place. In hindsight, it becomes clear that the empire of ἔρως has changed the ἐραστής in a radical way – and it is only after ἔρως disappears that he goes back to his normal state and identity. The former ἐραστής returns to νοῦς and σωφροσύνη. Before, he was μαινόμενος. He is now back in a world not defined by ἔρως, a world in which ἔρως is an anomaly, a world where δόξα and the values of the community outweigh, frame and moderate ἐπιθυμίαι, in short, a world of σωφροσύνη. Completely alienated from himself, the ἐραστής had been in the grip of this peculiar form of μανία that is ἔρως. As such, he is the bearer of a perspective on reality that is completely at odds with the perspective held by a healthy individual. The fact is that being in love consists in a radical and fundamental modification of one's nature. When affected by this disease, the whole person is defined and determined by the disease itself. The presence or absence of ἔρως is the key to define the ἐραστής' identity. To use the political metaphor, whoever rules in the city defines the city's identity (241a2). The ἐραστής, while under the tyranny of ἔρως, will act according to the orientation imposed by ἔρως, by what Socrates denominates as an ἀνοήτος ἀρχή (241a7). This will define his very identity. He is no longer Tom, Dick or Harry, but an ἐραστής, someone that lives only through and by the disease that is ἔρως. It is this disease that creates the want for the beloved; without it, that boy would not be needed. Because the presence of the erotic disease causes such a radical change on the very way of being of the lover, once he is cured, the former lover will be unable to

recognize himself in his previous self. He will not be the same, but rather another[206]. He will look back on his actions as something done by a stranger, as actions for which he will no longer be responsible. All his promises to the beloved will be seen as odious debts, the commitments of a government that is no longer in power and that acted against the interests of the former ἐραστής himself. Whatever he might owe the beloved will have been acquired not for the well-being of the former lover, but to satisfy a lust that was the result of an illness. Since he does not recognize himself in that strange person that behaved in such an odd way, since, in a way, he is no longer the same person, he will not assume those debts as his own. He will forsake the former beloved, and unilaterally default on his debts. From the point of view of the beloved, all that he has given to the lover - and, according to this speech, it will have been everything he has - in the hopes of getting some benefit from it – a benefit that will be expected according to the terms of pederastic relationship – will have been in vain[207].

However shocking the notion of ἔρως being a form of ὕβρις might seem to our modern sensibility, it is not completely absurd or outlandish. We can easily recognize as features of the phenomenon we call love at least some of the elements of Socrates' speech. We can surely recognize it as some form of desire, and even as obsessive desire. This obsession manifests itself in ways at least analogous to the ones pointed out by Socrates: the state of being in constant want for the beloved, the fact that the beloved is, in some way or another, the permanent object of our thoughts, the need to make the beloved part of our own life, the fact that the relationship with the beloved becomes the most important and indeed the core aspect of one's life. We still see love as an overwhelming force that can dominate one's life. It seems to be impossible to be in love with someone without wanting to invade their life and make it part of our own. It will, nevertheless, shock us to describe such phenomenon as a form of hunger or desire to consume the other in the same

[206] 241a2: "τότε δὴ δέον ἐκτίνειν, **μεταβαλὼν ἄλλον ἄρχοντα ἐν αὑτῷ καὶ προστάτην**, νοῦν καὶ σωφροσύνην ἀντ᾽ ἔρωτος καὶ μανίας, **ἄλλος γεγονὼς** λέληθεν τὰ παιδικά. καὶ ὁ μὲν αὐτὸν χάριν ἀπαιτεῖ τῶν τότε, ὑπομιμνήσκων τὰ πραχθέντα καὶ λεχθέντα, **ὡς τῷ αὐτῷ διαλεγόμενος**· ὁ δὲ ὑπ᾽ αἰσχύνης οὔτε εἰπεῖν τολμᾷ **ὅτι ἄλλος γέγονεν**, οὔθ᾽ ὅπως τὰ **τῆς προτέρας ἀνοήτου ἀρχῆς** ὁρκωμόσιά τε καὶ ὑποσχέσεις ἐμπεδώσῃ ἔχει, νοῦν ἤδη ἐσχηκὼς καὶ σεσωφρονηκώς, ἵνα μὴ πράττων ταὐτὰ τῷ πρόσθεν ὅμοιός τε ἐκείνῳ καὶ **ὁ αὐτὸς πάλιν γένηται**."

[207] No longer being under the rule of ἔρως, however, does not necessarily mean one is now living according to the orientations of δόξα. The multifaceted nature of ὕβρις allows for the substitution of one form of ruling ἐπιθυμία by another. And so one might cease to be an ἐραστής and still act under the compulsion of some other form of hypertrophied ἐπιθυμία. Even in this case, the ἐραστής will become other, as there is a cancelling out of the specific changes in him operated by the rule of ἔρως. As he is no longer interested in the ἐρώμενος, a former ἐραστής that is now under the rule of some other ἐπιθυμία will be as unwilling to fulfil the promises he made while still an ἐραστής, as if he were now in a state of perfect φρονεῖν.

way we desire to eat food or drink some kind of beverage. This logic of consumption finds its extreme expression in the speech's concluding dactylic hexameter verse: ὡς λύκοι ἄρνας ἀγαπῶσιν, ὡς παῖδα φιλοῦσιν ἐρασταί (241d1)[208].

However true Socrates' account may ring to us, there is something that seems to be missing there. We do not at all consider that lovers love their beloved in the same way that wolves love sheep. From a modern point of view, as well as from the conventional point of view of παιδεραστία, a beloved is not just food, something to be consumed: it is as well the point of application of a beneficient project. In fact, the logic of consumption at stake in this speech goes entirely against the existential programme of παιδεραστία. This existential programme presents itself as an endeavour to benefit the life of the ἐρώμενος. It is, in fact, the beneficial component of παιδεραστία, mostly of a didactic character, that is presented as a motivation and justification for the ἐρώμενος' willingness to χαρίζεσθαι.

The key to understanding what is missing in the speech, however, can be found in the very basis of the definition of ἔρως used in the speech. It is defined, from the very start, as a form of ἐπιθυμία. In the economy of the speech, ἐπιθυμία has a very specific meaning: it is understood as immediate and lacking any kind of logos. It is ultimately and in every case self-centred: what one desires is, in all cases referred to in the speech, self-fulfilment; and, for that matter, a self-fulfilment understood as consumption. In other words, in order to fulfil one's desire, the object of that desire has to be absorbed. At the same time, the existential state referred to as ὕβρις, desire unrestrained by δόξα, is of such a nature as to make the subject of said desire himself be, in its own way, absorbed by that desire. The one dominated by desire lives to fulfil the desire that dominates him; the object is nothing more than food to qualm his hunger. This, of course, reduces the realm of ἔρως to that of consuming desire, a desire that consumes both its subject and its object.

But erotic desire, however consuming, tyrannical and totalitarian it may be, includes a component that seems to make all the difference in this case: εὔνοια. It is this component that is at the core of the beneficial project of παιδεραστία. Beyond the overwhelming desire to be with the ἐρώμενος, and besides it, a different desire exists: the desire to have a positive influence in the ἐρώμενος' life, to make him happy, and to contribute decisively to that happiness. Therefore ἔρως cannot be reduced to the cannibal

[208] See DE VRIES, *ad locum*; ROWE, *ad locum*, and YUNIS, *ad locum.*

lust displayed by the non-lover of Socrates' first speech. When we take into account the fact that being in love includes this component, we can see how unilateral Socrates' account of this phenomenon is. Being in love may make one try to invade another person's life, to make oneself an important, even essential part of the other's life, yet this does not entail the destruction of the other. On the contrary, the lover wants the beloved to keep being what he perceives him to be; the only difference is that all those desirable predicates are now wanted within the realm of the lover's life. The lover perceives the beloved as a *condicio sine qua non* for his own happiness; for this reason, he does not want the beloved to be absorbed, he would rather have him forever, in permanent enjoyment of the predicates that made him desirable in the first place.

And yet, the unilaterality of Socrates' description of this phenomenon makes a serious point. The absence of εὔνοια is so conspicuous that it forces us to go look for it, as we did. But it also brings to the forefront an important problem that lies at the heart of the modern and paiderastic notion of ἔρως. Socrates' emphasis on the voracious nature of the component of ἐπιθυμία that we must recognise is a fundamental part of ἔρως, forces us to confront the possibility that there might be no place for εὔνοια there. It might so be that ἐπιθυμία and εὔνοια cannot be but at odds with each other, that the fact that we put them together to form our peculiar notion of ἔρως creates a strange and ultimately unviable hybrid. The unilateral emphasis on this specific aspect of ἔρως can and perhaps should be read as a challenge to our own understanding of this phenomenon, and alert us to the possibility that the modern notion of ἔρως might contain within itself an antinomy.

2.5. A complex model of μανία

The conception of μανία at stake in this speech is closely associated with the notion of ὕβρις as the predominance of ἐπιθυμία. As we have seen, ὕβρις is opposed to σωφροσύνη, i.e., the preponderance of the principle that is opposed to ἐπιθυμία: δόξα. In this respect, μανία is a phenomenon that is characterised by its opposition to the "rational" principle, which leads towards τὸ ἄριστον, whatever its deformalisation may be. But the specific μανία that is ἔρως is not merely opposed to σωφροσύνη. The fact is ὕβρις is a

generic term for the predominance of ἐπιθυμία, a hypertrophy of one determination over all the others, and admits a multiplicity of species, depending on the specific kind of ἐπιθυμία that predominates, that assumes the leadership role. There can be as many kinds of ὕβρις as there are kinds of ἐπιθυμία. The conflict within human nature that Socrates' first speech describes is not merely between the two main principles, ἐπιθυμία and δόξα, but also potentially between the different forms of ἐπιθυμία. In short, the formal notion of ὕβρις admits a multiplicity of deformalisations, ἔρως being just one among many. This means that the specific kind of ὕβρις that is ἔρως can also be opposed to other forms of ὕβρις. In order to become the predominant determination, ἔρως will have to subdue not only δόξα, but also the other kinds of ἐπιθυμία.

The μανία that characterises the ἐραστής differs from the other forms of ὕβρις only in the identity of its object. Like all other forms of ὕβρις, it is the result of the hypertrophy of one principle over the others. This manifests itself in a monomaniac obsession with the kind of object that specific ἐπιθυμία is direct towards. Without the moderating and guiding influence of δόξα, whatever ἐπιθυμία has the upper end will tend towards its own superlative. The inbalance caused by the maximisation of one ἐπιθυμία over every other principle will result in the kind of behaviour often associated with μανία: obsessive, exaggerated, completely at odds with what, by the standards of one's community, is deemed to be normal behaviour. It will take over one's life and alter it completely. It will lead one's life in a path of obsessive pursuit of the specific object of the kind of ἐπιθυμία that predominates, neglecting all other aims, or subordinating them to the goal that is defined by this particular ἐπιθυμία. As a result, the μαινόμενος will as a result be leading a life that is destructive not only to himself, who is directly under the power of μανία, but also to the ones who might be indirectly affected by it, namely, in the case of ἔρως, the ἐρώμενος. This description applies not only to ἔρως, but also to other forms of superlative and obsessive ἐπιθυμία. Other forms of ὕβρις will result in something analogous. Someone who, for example, is dominated by the ἐπιθυμία that drags one towards food, will live a life in obsessive pursuit of food, will be defined by this pursuit, and subordinate every other determination and goal to this specific aim.

Unlike the traditional view of μανία and ἔρως, this model is entirely endogenous. Μανία is explained as the result of an entirely internal inbalance, as a dysfunction of one's internal constitution. Both μανία and ἔρως are diseases in the medical, "secular" sense of the word: phenomena that can be explained as failures of normal functions and

operations[209]. No external interference is needed. There are no gods ready to strike one with μανία, be it as punishment or not – and ἔρως is not explained as an objective force, the enchantment that drags one towards one's ἐρώμενος. What Socrates introduces in his first speech is a view of the internal human constitution in the form a closed system of forces. Any relationship with the exterior will be unidirectional, one-sided: one may influence what is outside, when one is in the grip of μανία, as the ἐραστής messes with the ἐρώμενος' life, but the cause itself of the dysfunction will not be found without, but always within.

This conception of μανία is presented in a systematic, structured and "rational" way throughout the speech. The speech itself is an anti-μανία speech that supposedly shows performatively what lucidity, rationality and sanity should sound and look like: balanced, focused and organised. The "rational" organisation and tone of the speech, however, contrast heavily with the insistence on the role of μανία in its production. We have already mentioned that the fact that the speech is attributed to an ἐραστής pretending not to be under the influence of ἔρως, sc. a αἰμύλος, introduces, from the very start, an element of μανία into what claims to be a "rational" and sober account. Also the invocation of the Muses at the beginning of the speech mimicks the well-known poetical τόπος, and might suggest the tradition of the inspired poet, possessed by the Muses[210]. Once again, an allusion to a modality of μανία contrasts with the "rational" pretentions of a speech that mimicks the discourse typical of τέχνη.

However, the moment where Socrates seems to emphasize the presence and role of μανία in the production of the speech is at this midway point, after the definition of ἔρως is achieved, and before the description of the effects has begun. In this brief intermezzo, Socrates momentarily comes out of his performance to comment on it, as if in a dramatic aparte (238c5ff.). In this interlude, Socrates and Phaedrus remark on Socrates' unusual eloquence, which Socrates attributes to divine influence. The passage is full of μανία-related terms and phrases: θεῖον πάθος (238c4), παρὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς εὔροιά (238c5), θεῖος ἔοικεν ὁ τόπος εἶναι (238c6-d1) νυμφόληπτος (238d1), διθυράμβων

[209] Just like the model of explanation of the so-called "sacred disease" outlined in the Hippocratic *De morbo sacro*.

[210] 237a7ff.: "ἄγετε δή, ὦ Μοῦσαι, εἴτε δι' ᾠδῆς εἶδος λίγειαι, εἴτε διὰ γένος μουσικὸν τὸ Λιγύων ταύτην ἔσχετ' ἐπωνυμίαν, 'ξύμ μοι λάβεσθε' τοῦ μύθου, ὅν με ἀναγκάζει ὁ βέλτιστος οὑτοσὶ λέγειν" On the μανία that results from possession by the Muses, see chapter IV, 303ff., below.

φθέγγομαι (238d2-3)[211]. These seem to emphasize once again Socrates' supposed lack of control and responsibility in the production of the speech. It is not he himself, Socrates, who is making up that speech. Everything is off, out of the ordinary. Supposedly, Socrates is not usually this eloquent. There are signs that something else is playing a fundamental role – in fact, taking over Socrates and making him say what he is saying.

Of course, the fact that he is able to come out of it and make comments is a significant hint that he is not being overwhelmed or taken over by some exterior force. The fact that he insists so much on him being μαινόμενος actually makes one all the more suspicious that he is, in fact, completely in control. It also reminds us that this "rational" speech, a speech that has all the appearance of a "technical" speech, might be something very different. In the fact, the speech presents itself as being the bearer of a perspective similar to τέχνη. It claims to have a suitable understanding of what is at stake in its subject matter, human nature, so to speak, uncovering what is hidden and revealing what, from a normal perspective, cannot be seen. This understanding of human nature is supposedly total: it explains reality perfectly, without flaw, leaving nothing to be explained. It is, in this sense, a perspective that is in total control of itself, that has no need of anything exogenous to fulfil its task. In a context marked by the presence of a perspective such as this, the references to inspiration, to the interference of external forces in the production of the speech, seem odd and out of place. To be more precise, they create the impression that the supposedly "technical" and sovereign perspective might fall short of what it claims to be. It might so happen that it is overcome by a force that it cannot control or understand. In other words, the intermezzo reminds us that the status of the speech is far from settled.

The theme of the external interference on the uttering of the speech is resumed immediately after its end. Having uttered his dactylic hexameter, Socrates suddenly interrupts his speech. He leaves it at what Phaedrus believes is its midway point – having only produced a ψόγος of the ἐραστής, the ἐγκώμιον of the non-lover still to be made

[211] See NUSSBAUM, *op. cit.* 202-203; ROWE, *ad locum*; YUNIS, *ad locum*. This is the dialogue's first suggestion of what will become a major theme: the divine origin and nature of μανία. On the meaning of νυμφόληπτος, see: BEKKER, *ad locum*; AST, *ad locum*; STALLBAUM, *ad locum*; DE VRIES, *ad locum*; CALVO MARTÍNEZ, J. L., Sobre la manía y el entusiasmo, *Emerita* 41 (1973), 157-182, especially 171-172; ROWE, *ad locum*; CONNOR, W. R., Seized by the Nymphs: Nympholepsy and Symbolic Expression in Classical Greece, *Classical Antiquity* 7 (1988), 155-189; DAVIDSON, J., *The Greeks and Greek Love*: a radical reappraisal of homosexuality in ancient Greece, London, Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 2007, 189-190, 216-220; YUNIS, *ad locum*;. On the reference to dithyrambic poetry: DE VRIES, *ad locum*; YUNIS, *ad locum.* This theme is resumed immediately after the end of speech (238e1-4).

(241d4ff.). The reason Socrates invokes from this interruption is "stylistic": he has gone from using dythirambs (238d2) to epic verse: the dactylic hexameter, a type of verse completely unsuited for a ψόγος or an ἐγκώμιον[212]. If he is already uttering high-spirited and imposing verses while producing a ψόγος, who knows to what heights of poetic expression he will be led when actually pronouncing an ἐγκώμιον. In other words, Socrates hyperbolically and playfully expresses his fear of losing control of the proceedings, of ending up with something very different from what he first proposed to do. As we have seen, the speech is constructed using the discourse that is typical of τέχνη as a model. It is built as a discourse of sobriety, of self-control, and, especially, as a discourse that pertains to a supposed "technical" point of view, that claims to be the bearer of an accurate understanding of its subject-matter, ἔρως, and that expresses that understanding in a way that resembles a speech made by the someone who is adept at a specific τέχνη.

But now – or so Socrates claims – he is overwhelmed by poetic enthusiasm. Specifically, he is now very much in thrall of the Nymphs, whose power was already looming even before he started considering the effects of ἔρως (238d1). Now he claims to be really ἔνθεος, possessed by the Nymphs, νυμφόληπτος (2341e2f.). Putting aside the matter of the earnestness (or, on the contrary, the irony) of this claim, the supposed divine interference of the Nymphs has relevant consequences for the meaning and status of the speech. The game Socrates is playing is extraordinarily complex: the speech is attributed to a μαινόμενος who claims not to be so. The speech, under all the trappings of sobriety, lucidity and specialised knowledge, is, in fact, at the service of the opposite of that and is the product of μανία. And the whole lot is itself a fiction made up by Socrates. But by claiming to be himself under the influence of an exterior divine power, Socrates is taking this game even further. The man that produces the fiction of a μαινόμενος speaking for lucidity presents himself as μαινόμενος. In other words, in Socrates' first speech μανία talks about μανία talking about φρονεῖν.

But the supposed intervention of the Nymphs has a one further consequence, a consequence that directly affects the significance of the anthropological model presented in Socrates' first speech. As we have seen, the model is endogenous: ἔρως is explained not as the result of external intervention of some invasive force, but rather as the effect of

[212] See ROWE, *ad locum*; SALA, 119ff.; YUNIS, *ad locum*.

internal inbalance and dysfunction. One becomes μαινόμενος from within, and everything is explained within this closed system, so to speak. The remarks about the intervention of the Nymphs are a direct comment on this closed system model. Within the speech, external intervention is not even mentioned, and is unnecessary to explain the phenomena at stake. But the person who is uttering the speech is himself allegedly being affected by an invasive exterior force. Socrates' comments on his own speech erode the closed system model by bringing to the forefront the possibility of an exogenous kind of μανία. It shows that the model presented in the speech, in spite of its sophistication and apparent "technical" nature, may still be, after all, a partial and unilateral presentation of a more complex phenomenon.

2.6. The construction of a model of φρονεῖν

Socrates' first speech concentrates heavily on its description of the erotic disease, on the peculiar form of μανία that corresponds to the reign of ἔρως. Lysias explicitly presents, in the form of an ἐγκώμιον, the perspective of the paragon of φρονεῖν, the non-lover, side by side with the ψόγος of the μανία of the lover. Socrates, on the other hand, omits such an explicit description of the non-lover's presumed φρονεῖν. The reasons for this will be addressed in a later section. For now, we should concentrate on the fact that, in spite of the absence of that description, we can still find a model of the phenomenon of φρονεῖν in this speech. It can be found, first of all, in the perspective regarding the constitution of the human nature that served as the basis for the definition of ἔρως. Secondly, it can be found lurking beneath the description of the erotic disease as its shadow and counterpart.

One of the fundamental aspects of the definition of ἔρως resides on the opposition between σωφροσύνη and ὕβρις. As we have seen before, ἔρως is defined as a form of ὕβρις, as an ἐπιθυμία that has taken power away from δόξα and has assumed the role of ruler. The opposite situation, σωφροσύνη, is not, however, characterized by the absence of ἐπιθυμία. The difference between these two opposing states lies in the balance of forces between ἐπιθυμία and δόξα, not in the absence of any of them. Σωφροσύνη is the result of a balance of forces in which δόξα has the upper hand and decides the general direction one's behaviour will take. Ἐπιθυμία will be under control, but not suppressed. This fact alone suggests there is nothing in the state of σωφροσύνη necessarily incompatible with

the general impulse towards fruition that characterises the kinds of ἐπιθυμία that might become forms of ὕβρις. If we add to this the fact that ἐπιθυμία is said to be innate, it becomes likely that, according to this perspective, desires such as the ones that guide us towards food, drink or sex are not to be necessarily seen in a negative light by themselves, but only when they are in charge, i.e., when they go as far as to overcome the influence of δόξα. This, however, should not make us lose sight of the fact that the different kinds of ἐπιθυμία struggle and vie for power. As described in Socrates' first speech, human nature is a battlefield, the seat of forces in a state of ever potential conflict – not unlike a city in the grips of civil war. The different kinds of ἐπιθυμία are themselves the bearers of a tendency to go as far as possible, to dominate and expand as much as they can. The incompatible aspirations for power of δόξα, on the one hand, and the different kinds of ἐπιθυμία, on the other, set the stage for a series of conflicts between all these different players: as we have seen, once ἐπιθυμία emerges victorious from its primary war with δόξα, the different species of ἐπιθυμία will fight for supremacy, for the role of determining ἐπιθυμία within that peculiar force system. The savage conflicts human nature is the stage of, however, do not result in the anhilation of any of the contenders. No matter how low they are forced to bow, the vanquished are still there, and, even if for the moment they might appear to be declawed, nothing assures that they will not rise once again in defiance.

In short, however fierce the opposition between σωφροσύνη and δόξα might be, each of the competing ruling principles cannot destroy the other. They will have to settle somehow and live with each other, whenever one of them successfully gains the upper hand. The state of σωφροσύνη will not therefore be without desires; but it will not, however, be ruled by them. The ἀρχή will belong to δόξα, which will act as a moderating force over desires that, if left to their own devices, would cause devastation. Since the different kinds of ἐπιθυμία are innate and cannot be eliminated, they can only be kept in check, away from any position of power. The object desired by ἔρως need not be rejected by someone that is σώφρων; it merely has to be approached in such a way that is not incompatible with the concerns that characterise δόξα. The cure and vaccine for the erotic disease are to be found in this moderate approach, not in an impossible rejection of sexual desire. The φρονεῖν of which the σώφρων is the bearer resides in a moderate way of dealing with the innate desires that populate one's life. Φρονεῖν will in this case be equivalent to sobriety and self-control, to the ability to deal with desires without being

dominated by them. Thus, the idea of φρονεῖν as moderation contrasts with the notion of μανία as being made manifest in weird and excessive behaviours, in actions that far exceed what is deemed appropriate for a given situation.

The connection between the opposite of φρονεῖν and excess is further developed in the description of the effects of ἔρως and of the behaviour of the ἐραστής. The preponderance of ἐπιθυμία over δόξα leads to a situation wherein the whole life is guided by desire. This results in a form of limitation of perspective: one's access to reality becomes limited to the specific kind of awareness that is moulded and framed by desire. The beings one has to deal with will be seen in the light of their relation with the object of one's desires. They might help one to achieve them or they might hinder. Everything is put at the service of desire; everything that cannot be used in such a fashion is either ignored or actively rejected. The erotic disease is the bearer of a specific perspective on reality, a perspective that is centred around the object of desire, or, to be more accurate, centred around one's self as the subject of the fruition of the object of one's desire. The simple fact that, according to the speech, such a perspective admits an alternative, namely the perspective that relates to σωφροσύνη, would be enough to make one consider the possibility that this perspective may not be φρόνιμος. But the speech endorses the opposite perspective as φρόνιμος. The perspective dominated by desire is a form of μανία; the perspective dominated by δόξα will therefore by φρόνιμος. This perspective does not see reality under the light of desire, with the express intention of achieving as much pleasure as possible, but will rather consider desire under the light of δόξα, with the intention of achieving τὸ ἄριστον or τὸ ὀρθόν.

However, the vagueness of τὸ ἄριστον or τὸ ὀρθόν nothwithstanding, the perspective dominated by δόξα, σωφροσύνη, is endorsed by this speech as the one that corresponds to φρονεῖν. It is presented as the rational, sober, sensible, lucid perspective. This lucid perspective is furthermore associated with a specific way of life: a way of life that is, at the very least, not dominated by the different kinds of ἐπιθυμία, but in which the "rational" principle reigns supreme and acts as a power that moderates the potential excesses of the innate desires. The association of φρονεῖν with a specific way of living, points to another important factor in the understanding of φρονεῖν at stake in this speech. This understanding of φρονεῖν is based on socially approved perspectives and behaviours. The community as such is the bearer of the criterion that distinguishes φρονεῖν from μανία. In order to judge the φρόνιμος character of a specific perspective, one will have to

check for a coincidence between that perspective and those that have been widely adopted or at least approved by the overall community. In spite of his ostensive contempt for οἱ πολλοί, the speaker of the first speech of Socrates does not tread very far from what would have been perfectly acceptable by the vast majority of the citizens. He shares with them a general conception of φρονεῖν that, despite the possible differences in outlook that characterise different social groups in stratified societies, constitutes a common background. Moderation, self-control, putting one's reputation above one's enjoyment of pleasures, the very idea that ἔρως is to be avoided rather than embraced, all of these ideas could very well have been endorsed by most members of the πόλις. More than that, it seems that it is from the fact that they are shared by the general community that they derive most of their legitimacy.

2.7. The elliptical character of Socrates' speech – the silence regarding the non-lover

Socrates only does half the job. He completes the ψόγος of ἔρως, but does not even start the ἐγκώμιον of the absence of ἔρως. The non-lover is nowhere to be found in the speech – except as a mask worn by the fictional speaker, an ἐραστής trying to pass himself as a non-lover. He does this to gain advantage over his more honest rivals. The advantage, as can be deduced from our previous analyses, resides in the general negative view regarding ἔρως and the ambiguity of παιδεραστία as a beneficient project based and motivated by a phenomenon with such a bad reputation as ἔρως. A lover that pretends not to be a lover will, paradoxically, be seen as a better suitor in these circumstances. It is only after Phaedrus points out that the speech is incomplete (241d4ff.)[213] that Socrates finally produces the ἐγκώμιον of the non-lover (241e5-6)[214]. But this ἐγκώμιον is brief, elliptical and apophatic: whatever negative has been said regarding the lover, the opposite can be said regarding the non-lover. This extremely brief praise of the non-lover is in stark contrast with the elaborate and detailed censure of the lover. Whereas the situation of the lover was based on a detailed definition of ἔρως, nothing is explicitly said about the motivations of the non-lover in becoming a suitor. We can make an educated guess and speculate that he is motivated by a kind of desire that is under the control of δόξα, by

[213] "καίτοι ᾤμην γε μεσοῦν αὐτόν, καὶ ἐρεῖν τὰ ἴσα περὶ τοῦ μὴ ἐρῶντος, ὡς δεῖ ἐκείνῳ χαρίζεσθαι μᾶλλον, λέγων ὅσα αὖ ἔχει ἀγαθά· νῦν δὲ δή, ὦ Σώκρατες, τί ἀποπαύῃ;"
[214] "λέγω οὖν ἐνὶ λόγῳ ὅτι ὅσα τὸν ἕτερον λελοιδορήκαμεν, τῷ ἑτέρῳ τἀναντία τούτων ἀγαθὰ πρόσεστιν. καὶ τί δεῖ μακροῦ λόγου; περὶ γὰρ ἀμφοῖν ἱκανῶς εἴρηται."

a form of what we would be able to designate as σώφρων ἔρως, if the definition of ἔρως in this speech did not prevent such an association with the notion of σωφροσύνη. From the description of the effects of ἔρως, we can also imagine that the non-lover would endeavour to make the boy improve himself in every respect. His intervention would benefit the boy in his soul and body and make him gain wealth and friends. Following the same principle of opposition to what has been said about the lover, the non-lover's company would be exceedingly pleasant and the relationship with the boy would endure for a long time, creating an unbreakable bond with the non-lover.

As mentioned above, the justification presented by Socrates for not producing the ἐγκώμιον of the non-lover has to do with his fear of being overwhelmed and overtaken by the inspiration that has lead him to produce the speech. Socrates had already mentioned in the middle of the speech (238c5ff.) the θεῖον πάθος that was affecting him at the time. He attributed this to the fact that he and Phaedrus were at a θεῖος τόπος and anticipated that he might be taken by nymphs. Socrates claims he was uttering the speech in an altered state, as if possessed by the nymphs. When confronted with the fact that his rhetorical task has been left incomplete, Socrates excuses himself with the fact that he was being possessed (241e1-5) by those same nymphs. This lack of control over himself was frightening him so much that he could not carry on any further. This claim not only distances Socrates from the speech – a distance that had already been stressed at the beginning of it – but also dramatically introduces the notion of ἐνθουσιασμός. When uttering the speech, Socrates is ἔνθεος – and he does not seem to care for it very much. If he kept on going with his speech, his situation would only be aggravated.

This explicit explanation, found in the text itself, seems unsatisfactory[215]. This is not at all surprising, given how difficult it is to believe in the sincerity of Socrates' claim that he is actually experiencing possession by the nymphs. It all sounds more like a pose or another ironic claim, one that, however, introduces some important notions and opens the way for some crucial dramatic developments. One possible explanation for the omission of the praise of the non-lover from Socrates' first speech might lie on the rejection of the thesis Socrates has to defend in his speech, i.e., that the non-lover should be preferred to the lover in pederastic relationships[216]. According to this explanation,

[215] See GRISWOLD, 69-70.
[216] HACKFORTH, 53; YUNIS, 120.

Socrates would be comfortable with a ψόγος of ἔρως insofar as the notion of ἔρως at stake in the speech corresponds to a form of ἔρως he will later on in the dialogue (265a5-266b1) reject as resulting from a human disease. This form of ἔρως is opposed to another one, the protagonist of the palinode, for which Socrates has nothing but praise. Therefore, by accepting to censure the type of lover that is under the effect of the diseased kind of ἔρως, he is doing nothing wrong. But, if he accepted to praise the non-lover, he would be rejecting ἔρως altogether. From the point of view present in Lysias' speech and implicit in Socrates' first speech (i.e., from the point of view of the contract agreed between Socrates and Phaedrus), one can be in love, which is to be censured, or not, which is to be praised – *tertium non datur*.

But the palinode introduces a third option: a kind of ἔρως that is good and praiseworthy. By building his first speech around the exclusive disjunction between ἔρως and absence of ἔρως without taking into account the ambiguity and complexity of the phenomenon, Socrates would be making the same mistake as Lysias regarding the nature of ἔρως. By abstaining from developing the praise of the non-lover, Socrates would be saving himself from this mistake, which is tantamount to blasphemy. That Socrates stops himself from going further than he should is suggested by the unease he feels regarding the idea of praising the non-lover and his brief account of it[217]. Like Hackforth and Rowe[218], one could argue that, by rejecting the ἔρως described in his first speech, Socrates is being congruent with the views on love developed later in the dialogue. He rejects the specific kind of love that is described in his first speech. He does not accept the non-lover as he appears in Lysias' speech. But even if we were to accept the description of the lover in the first speech of Socrates as true, the speech would still be false, insofar as it had failed to introduce the fundamental distinction between the two kinds of ἔρως. When he defines ἔρως as ὕβρις, Socrates is already excluding the possibility of there being another kind of ἔρως. That Socrates ends up rejecting the perspective on love presented in his first speech as absolutely true is clear from what follows in the dialogue. But it is difficult to understand how a fully developed praise of the non-lover would be making matters worse. The blasphemy against the god ἔρως has already been committed when Socrates asserted that ἔρως is a form of ὕβρις. In fact, it is actually necessary, from a dramatic point of

[217] See especially 241-2: "κἀγὼ τὸν ποταμὸν τοῦτον διαβὰς ἀπέρχομαι πρὶν ὑπὸ σοῦ τι μεῖζον ἀναγκασθῆναι." Cf. DE VRIES' note *ad* 242a2; ROWE, *ad locum*; YUNIS, *ad locum*.
[218] HACKFORTH, 53; ROWE, 161-162.

view, that Socrates commits blasphemy, since that is his motivation for producing a palinode in the first place. From the point of view later endorsed by the palinode, praising the non-lover explicitly or not does not seem to make that much of a difference.

In any case, as Hackforth rightly remarks, Socrates indeed praises the non-lover, albeit in a very compact manner[219]. The well structured and organized nature of Socrates' speech, which is, as we have already seen, constituted in such a way as to be rooted in a set of principles from which everything else is deduced, allows for such an abbreviated ἐγκώμιον of the non-lover. Such an ἐγκώμιον would most likely follow a structure similar to the ψόγος of the ἐραστής: first, the establishment of a τι, followed by a deduction of the effects of the non-lover on the life of the boy. These two parts of the ἐγκώμιον of the non-lover would most likely be presented in a relatively abbreviated way. The matter of the τι has, for the most part, already been dealt with during the ψόγος; the ἐγκώμιον would perhaps only need to explain in more detail what the σωφροσύνη of the non-lover is. As for the effects of this σωφροσύνη, these could be easily deduced from the definition of σωφροσύνη, from the anthropological model already presented in the speech, and by contrast with the portrayal of the negative effects of the ἐραστής on the boy's life.

Perhaps the answer to the question about the apparent incompleteness of Socrates' first speech is therefore simpler than we had anticipated. The reason might be mostly pragmatic: the work is already done. On the one hand, the well-structured nature of the speech allows for the ἐγκώμιον to be easily deduced from what Socrates has already done. On the other hand, the point of the speech, its ficticious existential programme, can be easily achieved just with the ψόγος of the ἐραστής. By portraying the ἐραστής in a superlatively negative light, the αἰμύλος is already helping his case enormously: if he persuades the boy, he will have destroyed his rivals' chances, since all of them will be, most likely, self-confessed ἐρασταί. This being done, the ἐγκώμιον of the non-lover would become unnecessary, even redundant. From a dramatic point of view, leaving the speech unfinished is clearly the better option.

3. Assessment: differences and similarities

3.1. Different construction of the argument

[219] HACKFORTH, 53. See also: GRISWOLD, 69-70.

Lysias' and Socrates' first speech share a number of important thematic and conceptual similarities. These will be dealt with in the next few sections of this chapter. However, there are important differences between them that should not be overlooked. These differences are most obvious when we look at the different rhetorical strategies followed by the two speakers. According to the terms of the rhetorical challenge that caused the speech to be produced, Socrates will not have to make any innovations in terms of content. He does not need to introduce new arguments or present a different understanding of the phenomenon at stake. He just has to present the ones already used by Lysias but in a better way. However, by following a different rhetorical strategy, and especially *because* he followed that specific rhetorical strategy, Socrates ended up bringing to the table, if not points that could be considered new, at least aspects of the subject matter that were simply implied by Lysias, but never made explicit.

Lysias' speech starts *in medias res*. The existential situation is implied, never explained. The first glimpse we get of it is in the appeal of the non-lover himself, as if he was in the middle of explaining himself to the boy. As such, we are transported to a situation that is already developing. Most arguments presented are heavily dependent on commonly held assumptions regarding ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν, as well as on the intricacies of παιδεραστία. By cleverly taking advantage of the confusion regarding these phenomena, Lysias manipulates the arguments in favour of his basic thesis. He portrays ἔρως as an absolutely negative force and the lover as a bumbling fool that will not be able to carry out the educational tasks that didactic component of παιδεραστία entail. At the same time, he assigns to the non-lover the positive aspects of ἔρως and παιδεραστία. By constructing his speech around a step-by-step comparison between the two figures, Lysias adds negative features to negative features, positive aspects to positive aspects, and gradually makes the lover less and less appealing and the non-lover more and more desirable. By not explicitly carrying out a systematic and exhaustive definition and characterisation of ἔρως and by building his speech in a somewhat confusing way, Lysias allows himself more room to mystify and mislead. Although the thesis he is trying to defend is at first startling and outlandish, the arguments that he uses to support it are just unilateral presentations of traditional τόποι regarding phenomena that were already characterized by a significant degree of complexity and ambiguity.

Socrates chooses a different path. Socrates' speech is preceded by a little frame story: once upon a time there was a lover who pretended not be in love and, under, that

pretence, decided to make a speech censuring love in order to persuade his beloved to favour him over his rivals. The fact that we are warned in advanced that the speaker is deceitful should make us more careful when considering the theses he presents. It does not, however, necessarily mean that what he is about to say is false. He is lying about his existential situation, about him not being in love, not necessarily about love itself. In other words, even if the intention is deceitful, the content might be sound. One can use the truth to deceive. However, the fact that he is a liar contrasts starkly with the preoccupation with accuracy and the truth that permeates the rest of the speech. He is so concerned with the truth that he cannot go on without defining ἔρως with precision. He acknowledges and insists on the importance of knowing the subject matter of one's deliberations. He encourages clarity of thought. We have already mentioned the difficulties surrounding the fact that the fictional speaker of this speech is someone who is affected by a μανία of the erotic kind pretending to be φρόνιμος while discussing a form of μανία. We shall refrain from mentioning the irony of the situation, an irony that is compounded by the intellectual flavour of the first part of the speech. But this "intellectualism", this emphasis on the importance of knowledge, has the virtue of making explicit what in Lysias' speech was for the most part taken for granted and implicit. In his attempt to define ἔρως, Socrates presents a perspective on the complex constitution of human beings. They are the seat of two different forces, ἐπιθυμία and δόξα,that pull in different directions, the one towards pleasure, the other towards τὸ ἄριστον.

The orientation of one's life is understood as the result of the relationship between these two forces. Depending on which of them has the upper hand, one will be in a situation characterized by σωφροσύνη or ὕβρις. It is as a kind of ὕβρις that ἔρως is understood, as desire gone wild, unrestrained by the competing principle. That this is explained through a theory regarding man's immanent nature, as an aspect of his peculiar constitution contrasts with the traditional notion that ἔρως was of extrinsic origin, the result of the intervention of a foreign power. It is unclear which of these conceptions of ἔρως is assumed by Lysias, or if that would even be relevant for the purposes of his speech. Lysias' speech is silent about it. But Socrates' first speech is explicitly moving away from the perspective that regards ἔρως as an exogenous force and towards a conception that makes him the result of a constitutive disturbance. It is a disease, but understood not as the result of the actions of a god, but as the result of a deficiency in the way the soul works. Even if, unlike what we will find in the palinode, this does not disturb

the strong conviction that φρονεῖν is the default setting of our perspective, it still introduces the idea that the human perspective contains within itself the possibility of its own defect.

Attributing the cause of the disease that is ἔρως to a constitutive defect serves another important purpose. By doing so, Socrates emphasises the analogy between ἔρως and desires such as thirst and hunger. One would hardly be able to find such analogy in Lysias' speech. In the case of the first speech of Socrates, however, ἔρως is presented as a diseased form of desire. Considering that desire is described as an innate component of human nature, one that, without the restraint imposed by the opposing force, tends towards its own superlative, ὕβρις will be the expected consequence of the weakness of this restraining force. Where δόξα is weak, ἐπιθυμία rules. But ἐπιθυμία is a permanent component of human nature, which means that, in its restrained, moderate form, desire plays a role in human life. Hunger and thirst are natural aspects of living, since one has to eat and drink in order to survive. In the same way, ἔρως, or, to be more precise, the elements of ἔρως that are compatible with the rule of δόξα, will be present even in a healthy individual. This is explicitly referred to as ἐπιθυμία τῶν καλῶν, if we are right in interpreting the genitive plural as masculine. In the same way that unrestrained desire for food and drink will result in gluttony and drunkenness, unrestrained ἐπιθυμία τῶν καλῶν, will result in ἔρως, a form of sexual desire that goes beyond the boundaries of what is healthy and which leads to wanton and excessive behaviours.

By making this connection between ἔρως and excess explicit, and by relating excess with disease, Socrates is able to compose a stronger, sterner censure of the lover than Lysias. By connecting ἔρως with hunger and thirst, Socrates is able to distance this phenomenon from the idea of being in love, with all the components of εὔνοια that being in love implies. Doing this allows Socrates to portray ἔρως as a specific form of ἐπιθυμία gone wild, as a desire to consume its object, in the same way hunger is a desire to consume food: ὡς λύκοι ἄρν’ ἀγαπῶσ’, ὡς παῖδα φιλοῦσιν ἐρασταί (241d1). He is also able to explicitly provide an explanation to a fact that would baffle all those readers that would associate the character of the non-lover in both speeches with the absence of sexual desire towards the boy: the fact that the non-lover is wooing the boy in the first place. By associating ἔρως with desires such as hunger and thirst, Socrates is somehow showing it to be the excessive version of a normal aspect of human life. The αἴμυλος may be a lover posing as a non-lover, but this does not mean he is saying to the boy he does not desire

him sexually; it just means that his desire is under control. Lysias' non-lover also desires the boy sexually, but he is not in love with him, i.e., he is of sound mind and therefore perfectly capable of conducting the affair in a way that is pleasing and beneficial for both.

Lysias' rhetorical strategy feeds on the complexity of ἔρως and on ambiguity regarding παιδεραστία. Socrates, in contrast, makes an apparent effort to eliminate ambiguity, to make his subject matter as clearly defined as possible. But this apparent will to be clear does not result in a fairer or more accurate perspective on the phenomenon of ἔρως than the one produced by Lysias. In order to follow the rhetorical program that has been assigned to him, Socrates has to adopt a strategy of unilateral deformation of the phenomenon he is dealing with. Clarity, in this case, comes at the expense of the complexity and ambiguity of a phenomenon that is indeed complex and ambiguous. But this effort towards clarity has the virtue of uncovering certain aspects that had been left buried and hidden in Lysias' speech.

3.2. Similarity traits between the two speeches. Thematic similarity and similarity of theses about ἔρως

The differences between the speeches, however, pale in comparison with the similarities. These have already been mentioned in our previous analyses. But it is now time to look back at these similarities in order to draw a general picture of the perspectives on ἔρως, φρονεῖν and μανία that permeate these two speeches. The most evident common trait between the speech of Lysias and the first speech of Socrates is the unrestrained negative view of ἔρως shared by both. In their shared rhetorical programme, i.e., in order to defend their basic thesis that χαριστέον μὴ ἐρῶντι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐρῶντι, both speeches become ψόγοι of ἔρως, albeit structured in a different way. That their view of ἔρως is absolutely negative is a necessary consequence of their attempt to persuade the boy to stay away from the lover and choose the non-lover.

But this is also not surprising, when we consider the fact that both speeches make use of traditional τόποι regarding ἔρως to support their arguments. However strange and outlandish the basic thesis of these speeches might seem, the truth is a negative view of ἔρως was well within the bounds of mainstream ancient Greek values. In fact, as we have seen before, the most commonly held view regarding this phenomenon seems to have been one that emphasized its destructive aspects over its beneficial effects. The idea of

ἔρως as a destructive force is widespread and prevalent amongst most surviving literary sources. That ἔρως was a disease, as both Lysias and Socrates state, and a form of μανία is perfectly consistent with Greek tradition, who viewed ἔρως not as fundamental component of life, but as an anomalous event that might affect some. The idea that ἔρως exercises a tyrannical power over the one who is affected by it is also widely used in both speeches. Ἔρως τύραννος turns the lover into a slave, forcing him to behave in a way that is both ruinous and shameful for him. The loss of sovereignty that this entails results in the loss of civic dignity. Being a respected citizen is incompatible with being a slave, even if one's master is a force as powerful as ἔρως.

The two speeches can be read as ψόγοι of ἔρως in general, but they are mostly concerned with a specific kind of erotic relationship: παιδεραστία. It is, after all, in a pederastic context that the issues regarding ἔρως are addressed: both speeches are fictional attempts to persuade a ἐρώμενος to choose a specific suitor. As such, they draw upon the official discourse of παιδεραστία. This is done not by endorsing παιδεραστία as the beneficial project it claims itself to be, but rather by manipulating and inverting these claims. Ancient pederasty was asymmetrical, i.e., erotic attachment was one-directional, from ἐραστής to ἐρώμενος. Since the ἐρώμενος was a future citizen, and therefore, unlike, for example, a slave, protected from constraint, it was necessary to argue that he would benefit in some way from that relationship. Otherwise, he would most likely refuse to grant his favours. Mostly, παιδεραστία claims to be the bearer of benefits of a didactical nature: the suitor, being older, wiser and more experienced in the ways of the world, would be in a position to teach and instruct his beloved in what was needed in order to become a good and valued member of the community. The claim that the purpose of ancient pederasty was the benefit of the beloved through erotic attachment, was, as we have mentioned before, already seen with at least some suspicion. In fact, it is not difficult to understand how one could think of such claims as mere excuses for lechery. Also, the idea that ἔρως made one *non compos mentis* becomes an obvious objection to the pederastic claims. Lysias uses this argument to show that the lover cannot fulfil παιδεραστία's didactic purposes, since he is himself μαινόμενος. Socrates, on the other hand, gets rid of παιδεραστία's claims to benefit the beloved altogether, denouncing it as an attempt to enjoy without hindrance the pleasures that can be derived from the beloved's company. In both cases, the ἐραστής is denounced either as a bumbling fool or as a manipulative liar.

3.3. Similarity concerning the opposition between φρονεῖν and μανία

We can find important similarities between the two speeches also in what regards the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition. Both Lysias' and Socrates' first speech seem to share a common perspective on these two phenomena. It is on this common perspective that their theses regarding ἔρως and its role in human existence are based, since ἔρως is understood in both speeches as a form of μανία. For this reason, as we have seen, ἔρως and μανία tend to be understood in a similar way, with both being opposed to φρονεῖν.

Like ἔρως, μανία is understood as a νόσος, a disease. We have already mentioned that it is unclear what conception of disease is at stake in Lysias' speech. He is silent regarding the origin, cause and manifestation of the disease. He might think of it according to the terms of ancient myth, which attributed it to the intervention of an external supernatural force; or he might have a perspective more similar to ancient medicine, with its insistent in immanent physical causes. Either way, both ἔρως and μανία are seen as temporary diseases: they come and go without warning. This view is shared by Socrates in his first speech, although in this case disease is caused by the preponderance of one of the elements within one's soul. The result of this disease is loss of sovereignty. The μαινόμενος loses control over himself; he is no longer the one in charge. The peculiar form of μανία that is ἔρως becomes the actual ruler of the lover's life - in the same way that, for all other μαινόμενοι, it is their particular form of μανία that rules. The disease that is μανία is opposed to the notion of σωφροσύνη. This opposition applies to the various meanings of this notion. Insofar as σωφροσύνη is understood as the healthy condition of one's mind, the opposition to its corresponding disease is obvious. Μανία is to the mind what physical disease is to the body; σωφροσύνη is to the mind what health is to the body. But μανία is also associated with lack of control over oneself and with excessive behaviour. A μαινόμενος, of which the lover is the most evident example, will be deprived of σωφροσύνη so far as he is deprived of the ability to control his own urges and impulses.

The two speeches are texts written from a perspective supposedly in possession of φρονεῖν. As such, they look at μανία as something alien and bizarre. The μαινόμενος behaves is strange and eccentric in the way he behaves. The categories used to understand normal behaviour do not seem to apply to the behaviour of the μαινόμενος. That this

results in a unmitigated condemnation of said behaviour and in a absolutely negative view of the phenomenon is not surprising. The oddity of the behaviour of the μαινόμενος, as illustrated by the lover, is such that it constitutes a significant obstacle to the good guidance of his life. Μανία does not lead the one who is under its power to a good place. It rather brings problems and even ruin, making the μαινόμενος forget in what resides his own good and forcing him to follow prospects that can only harm him and others. The μαινόμενος is seen by both Lysias and Socrates as a dangerous and harmful person not only for himself, but also for those who surround him. But the oddity of this behaviour is derived from the intensity of emotions that is the result of μανία. The μαινόμενος is furious, prone to mood changes, wildly attached to the objects of his affection. In him, everything is excessive, including his moods. By contrast, φρονεῖν lacks this kind of intensity of feeling. The absence of this is seen as a sign and even as a requirement of φρονεῖν. The non-lover, the perfect example of the φρόνιμος, is calm and cool, moderate in the expression of his emotions, free from being carried away by his moods. But not only is he harmful, he is also the subject of contempt. Μανία diminishes the one who is under its power in the eyes of the community. He is no longer a wholesome citizen, worthy of respect, but rather the subject of some mysterious force. He is, in a way, a slave, with all the negative connotations, including the lack of dignity, that that entails. Μανία excludes one from the community, makes one useless and unworthy of belonging it.

The two speeches are written from a perspective that considers itself to be in possession of φρονεῖν. This conviction regarding their φρόνιμος character is based on the fact that the perspective from which the speeches are written is in agreement with the perspective adopted by the community of which they are members. The φρονεῖν of which Lysias' non-lover claims to be the bearer and Socrates' αἴμυλος pretends to share is the same φρονεῖν that their community attributes to their own perspective on reality. This social component of φρονεῖν plays a fundamental role in the speeches. The μαινόμενος is the bearer of a perspective on reality that is different from the one of the community in which he lives. This means that, to put it in a very simple way, he thinks differently from most people. The socially shared perspective is assumed to be correct. This seems to be the default setting for most perspectives: they are usually considered to be φρόνιμος by the one who holds it, with few exceptions. This tendency is reinforced when a perspective is shared by a community. The fact that others think in a like manner is seen as confirmation of the soundness of one's perspective.

Chapter IV
The Palinode: Beneficial Μανία

Her madness hath the oddest frame of sense, such a dependency of thing on thing, as e'er I heard in madness.

Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, Act V, Scene 1

1. From blame to praise: the way to the palinode

Socrates' first speech may, at least to a certain extent, be read as a development of the ideas presented in Lysias' speech. Socrates picks up Lysias' main argument and goes deeper and further with it. But what Socrates will now be doing goes in a different direction. The transition between Socrates' first speech and the palinode constitutes a turning point in the whole dialogue. The epideictic challenge issued by Phaedrus after the reading of Lysias' speech is re-issued by Socrates after his first speech. This challenge could be seen as a simple continuation of the previous one, as an elaboration on the themes and notions present in the previous speeches. However, what Socrates does is take the sequence of speeches in a different direction. The thematic focus will still be ἔρως and its effect on human life, but the character of the next speech will be the reverse. The ψόγοι will make place for a praise or, if Phaedrus' wish comes true, a series of praises of ἔρως. This change in the direction of the dialogue comes as a consequence of what is presented as a sudden realisation by Socrates. He clearly realises, as a result of his divine sign, that the speech he has just made is blasphemous and that he must stay and somehow expiate his fault (242b7ff.)[220]. The charge of blasphemy introduces a substantial degree of seriousness into what had been, so far, an almost frivolous exchange of speeches.

Now, one must bear in mind that the nominal constraint under which Socrates composes his first speech has relevant consequences for the status of the speech and its constituent theses. Socrates seems to be all too eager to abandon the speech at what Phaedrus considers to be just a midway point of the programme of the epideictic challenge. The cursory treatment of what would amount to the second half of his speech (sc., the

[220] "ἡνίκ' ἔμελλον, ὠγαθέ, τὸν ποταμὸν διαβαίνειν, τὸ δαιμόνιόν τε καὶ τὸ εἰωθὸς σημεῖόν μοι γίγνεσθαι ἐγένετο — ἀεὶ δέ με ἐπίσχει ὃ ἂν μέλλω πράττειν — καί τινα φωνὴν ἔδοξα αὐτόθεν ἀκοῦσαι, ἥ με οὐκ ἐᾷ ἀπιέναι πρὶν ἂν ἀφοσιώσωμαι, ὡς δή τι ἡμαρτηκότα εἰς τὸ θεῖον."

part dealing explicitly with the praise of the lover) is an expression of Socrates' reluctance towards the theses he is being forced to defend. He is about to cross the river and depart from the place where he was coerced to do something that he considers so distasteful. He is eager to leave so that he is not forced by Phaedrus to do something even worse – πρὶν ὑπὸ σοῦ τι μεῖζον ἀναγκασθῆναι (242a1). The sense that Socrates has done something that goes beyond the acceptable limit, that he has somehow been the author of a serious transgression looms over this exchange. Phaedrus' tone is more relaxed. He is the one that introduces a theme that will play an important dramatic role after the palinode: the midday heat. For Socrates, the delightful place beside the Illissus is treated almost as an accursed place, a place that has to be left behind as soon as possible. For Phaedrus, there is no such change in the mood of the place. It is still the same pleasant spot it was at the beginning – or even more pleasant now that it is refuge against the midday heat. But Phaedrus, as usual, has second intentions. He wants to discuss what has been said so far. Socrates sees through this and understands that Phaedrus' thirst for speeches has not and even may never be quenched. Phaedrus' φιλολογία is about to be delighted once more, for Socrates is now about to start another speech – a speech that will change the direction of the whole dialogue and introduce themes, notions and theses not seen so far in the dialogue.

But Socrates' second speech is not introduced to satisfy Phaedrus' appetite. As with the previous speech, Socrates is coerced into making this new speech. This coercion, however, is of a different nature and has different implications and consequences. The coercion at stake here is, at least nominally, of divine origin. It is not Phaedrus who prevents Socrates from crossing the river and leaving the place by the Illissus; it is rather something Socrates calls "τὸ δαιμόνιόν τε καὶ τὸ εἰωθὸς σημεῖον" (242b7ff.) that intervenes decisively and forces Socrates to stay where he is and resume his speech-making. This δαιμόνιον σημεῖον is a recurring element in the *corpus platonicum*, often mentioned as a force that guides Socrates through his life by preventing him from doing certain actions or saying certain words. At this point in the dialogue, the divine sign prevents Socrates from leaving and makes him look back upon what has been said so far. It provides the starting point for an overall revision of the theses regarding ἔρως that have been articulated up until now. In this passage of the *Phaedrus*, the δαιμόνιον σημεῖον sharpens and gives a more concrete form to what was before a mere inkling or intimation. The perspective on the previous speeches had already been expressed in the form of reluctance, hesitation and shame. These, however, seem to have been no more than vague

feelings, without any substantial explicit content. These feelings are now confirmed by the "divine sign".

The previous speeches were affected by a fundamental ἁμάρτημα (242c5). This ἁμάρτημα has to be understood as more than just a simple factual mistake. We should understand it as being composed of two fundamental elements: εὐήθεια and ἀσέβεια (242d7)[221]. Let us first concentrate on the element of εὐήθεια, without which we cannot gain a full understanding of the impiety at stake here. The nature of the mistake made by Lysias, Phaedrus and Socrates is, at first sight, denying that ἔρως is a god. However, we would fail to find any passage in which this denial is articulated in so many words. The denial of the divinity of ἔρως is not made explicit in any of the previous speeches. It is a silent denial, which is implicit in the fact that ἔρως has been the object of blame and censure. The stupidity of Lysias, Phaedrus and Socrates – the fundamental mistake they have fallen prey to – is ignoring a simple truth about the gods: that they can do no harm (242e3)[222]. The presence of the gods in human life is, according to this conception, entirely beneficial. More than that: it seems to be incompatible with a god's nature to exert any kind of harmful influence in human life. That this is in disagreement with what we know of Ancient Greek religion is evident even from a cursory reading of most literary sources or from studying their religious rituals[223]. But this is accepted without discussion or debate by Phaedrus and does not even merit a second look after it is first mentioned and used as a pretext for the palinode. If this notion is taken as a fact, attributing any harmful consequences to the intervention of ἔρως will be equivalent to a denial of its divine nature. Gods do no harm: if ἔρως is harmful, it cannot be a god; if it is god, it cannot be harmful. But this εὐήθεια is more than simple foolishness. This is not a mistake made simply out of ignorance or lack of knowledge regarding the true nature of ἔρως. This is a εὐήθεια πάνυ ἀστεία (242e5), worldly, refined, in other words, pertaining to the

[221] "εὐήθη καὶ ὑπό τι ἀσεβῆ: οὗ τίς ἂν εἴη δεινότερος;" On the notion of ἀσέβεια, see also chapter I, p. 45, n. 21.
[222] "εἰ δ᾽ ἔστιν, ὥσπερ οὖν ἔστι, θεὸς ἤ τι θεῖον ὁ Ἔρως, οὐδὲν ἂν κακὸν εἴη"
[223] See, for example, HARRISON, J., *Prolegomena to the study of Greek religion*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1903, 7ff.; WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORF, U., *Der Glaube der Hellenen*, Berlin, Weidmann, 1931; NILSSON, M., *Greek Piety*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1948; IDEM, *A History of Greek Religion*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1949, 2nd edition; DES PLACES, E., *La religion grecque: dieux, cultes, rites, et sentiments religieux dans la Grèce antique*, Paris, Picard et Cie., 1969; BURKERT, W., *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, Stuttgart, Berlin, Köln, Mainz, Kohlhammer, 1977, 371-376.

sophisticated intellectual milieu of the city proper[224]. This mistake is the product of an attempt to be witty and sophisticated, it is the result of the spirit behind Lysias' epideictic exercise. This attitude, which at the beginning was the object of the utmost admiration, is now classified as something foolish – worse than that: as something foolish and presumptuous in its own foolishness.

This aspect of the attempt to blame ἔρως by the previous speeches is, in part, what Socrates classifies as δεινόν (242d4). Before this point in the dialogue, this term has been used twice: once by Phaedrus (228a1) and once, not long afterwards (229d4)[225], by Socrates. Phaedrus uses this word to qualify Lysias as the ablest or cleverest of the present day writers. Appropriately, he uses the superlative form and this is intended as an unrestrained compliment to Lysias abilities, in stark contrast to Phaedrus' inability to recite his speech from memory. In this usage, δεινός expresses the remarkable ability of the intellectual virtuoso. Socrates' use in 229d4 echoes Phaedrus' use, but already hints at something more disturbing about this. Socrates uses the word to describe those σοφοί that spend their lives providing rational interpretations for the myriad of myths and mythological figures that crowd ancient Greek culture. The idea that this can only be done by someone very clever, a true intellectual virtuoso, is still present, almost reverberating what Phaedrus said shortly before. However, Socrates ends up describing this as an unfortunate task and, going even further, describes the wisdom of who engages in this activity as ἄγροικος (229e3). This ἄγροικος τις σοφία is the perfect mirror image of the εὐήθεια πάνυ ἀστεία that is to be found in 242e5.

The εὐήθεια at stake here is a εὐήθεια regarding the nature of the gods. By denying, at least implicitly, a god's divinity and by assigning to him the responsibility for superlatively disastrous actions, Lysias, Phaedrus and Socrates are all partners in blasphemy. They have not shown the due reverence and devotion towards the god. That the "theology" that sustains this view is far from being mainstream within ancient Greek culture does not seem to disturb the dialogue in any way. This traditional perspective, exemplified by Greek tragedy and epic poetry, for example, does not include such an idea.

[224] Cf. Socrates' first reaction to the thesis of Lysias' speech in 227c7-d2. The adjective ἀστείος is used to characterize the alternative epideictic speeches suggested by Socrates, therefore implying that Lysias' thesis is not all that ἀστείος.

[225] 228a1-2: "Λυσίας ἐν πολλῷ χρόνῳ κατὰ σχολὴν συνέθηκε, δεινότατος ὢν τῶν νῦν γράφειν, ταῦτα ἰδιώτην ὄντα ἀπομνημονεύσειν ἀξίως ἐκείνου;". 229d4: "λίαν δὲ δεινοῦ καὶ ἐπιπόνου καὶ οὐ πάνυ εὐτυχοῦς ἀνδρός".

The gods are above humans, are more powerful, but they are not necessarily good. They live beyond human morality, and do as they want. They do not hesitate in doing harm to human beings, if that serves their purposes, or as a form of punishment, or just because. The idea that the gods do no harm goes against most of Greek tradition. Socrates will surely be aware of this fact. Phaedrus will be as well informed in this respect[226]. This,

[226] The cultural landscape, as usual, is much more complex than what this statement might suggest. If it is true that most of the poetic tradition seems to present an understanding of the gods that can be aptly described as amoral, it is also true that, throughout the centuries, an alternative way of understanding the gods can also be found. This is true not only of the philosophical tradition, where authors like Xenophanes and Heraclitus present a criticism of "traditional" religious narratives and beliefs, but also of poetry itself. In fact, one of the recurrent themes in ancient Greek "theology" is the demand and expectation of the divine enforcement of justice in a cruel and unjust world. This means that, at the same time that the gods of Homer and in most of the poetic tradition are portrayed as amoral, capricious and over-powerful beings, they may also be portrayed as the enforcers and keepers of justice, as those powers to which mortals appeal to redress their grievances and right or punish the wrongs done to them. These two perspective, sc. the belief in the amorality and cruelty of the gods, and the idea that they were the enforcers of justice, are both to be found in ancient Greek literary tradition. The idea proper that doing evil deeds is incompatible with divine nature has also clear antecedents in Pindar, Democritus and Pausanias. See: PINDAR, *Ol.* I, 35: "ἔστι δ' ἀνδρὶ φάμεν ἐοικὸς ἀμφὶ δαιμόνων καλά: μείων γὰρ αἰτία"; DEMOCRITUS, DK 175B: "οἱ δὲ θεοὶ τοῖσι ἀνθρώποισι διδοῦσι τἀγαθὰ πάντα καὶ πάλαι καὶ νῦν. πλὴν ὁκόσα κακὰ καὶ βλαβερὰ καὶ ἀνωφελέα, τάδε δ' οὔ<τε> πάλαι οὔτε νῦν θεοὶ ἀνθρώποισι δωροῦνται, ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ τοῖσδεσιν ἐμπελάζουσι διὰ νοῦ τυφλότητα καὶ ἀγνωμοσύνην"; EURIPIDES, frag. 292 N^2, 7: "εἰ θεοί τι δρῶσιν αἰσχρόν, οὐκ εἰσὶν θεοί"; IDEM, *Iphigenea in Tauride*, 391: "οὐδένα γὰρ οἶμαι δαιμόνων εἶναι κακόν". The presence of this understanding of the role and nature of the gods can also be read as a reflection of the criticism of traditional myths found elsewhere in the *corpus Platonicum*, e.g. *Republic* II, 379a4ff. But we should not overlook the fact that no such explicit criticism appears at this point in the *Phaedrus*. The reference is cursory at best. The thesis is barely sketched out and Phaedrus accepts it without a comment nonetheless. The ready acquiescence to this perspective can be explained in two ways: either Phaedrus, as a member of the intellectual elite, recognizes and immediately accepts the well-known philosophical criticism of traditional mythology, and, to a lesser extent, the alternative poetic and literary "theological" perspective, or he is so eager to be presented with another speech and so delighted by this prospect that he willingly accepts whatever thesis in order to get what he desires. These two explanations are not mutually exclusive. See, e.g., DECHARME, P., *La Critique des Traditions Religieuses chez les Grecques*, Paris, A. Picard, 1904; GREENE, W. C., Fate, Good, and Evil, in Early Greek Poetry, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 46 (1935), 1-36; CALHOUN, G., Homer's Gods: Prolegomena, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 68 (1937), 11-25; JAEGER, W., *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1947; ELSE, G., God and Gods in Early Greek Thought, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 80 (1949), 24-36; GRUBE, G., The Gods of Homer, *Phoenix* 5 (1951), 62-78; VLASTOS, G., Theology and Philosophy in Early Greek Thought, *The Philosophical Quarterly* 2 (1952), 97-123; ROSE, H., CHANTRAINE, P., SNELL, B., GIGON, O., KITTO, H., CHAPOUTHIER, F., VERDENIUS, W., *La Notion du Divin depuis Homère*, *Entretiens sur L'Antiquité Classique* I, 8-13 September 1952, Genève, Genève, Fondation Hardt Vandoeuvres, 1954; CAMP, J., CANART, P., *Le Sens to Mot ΘΕΙΟΣ chez Platon*, Louvain, Bibliotheque de l'université, Bureaux du recueil, 1956, 102; MCGIBBON, D., The Religious Thought of Democritus, *Hermes* 93 (1965), 385-397; DES PLACES, *op. cit.*; BURKERT, *op.cit.*, 452ff.; LLOYD-JONES, H., *The Justice of Zeus*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2nd edition, 1983; RIEDWEG, C., The 'atheistic' fragment from Euripides 'Bellerophon', *Illinois Classical Studies* 15 (1990), 39-53; GOCER, A., A New Assessment of Socratic Philosophy of Religion, in: SMITH, N., WOODRUFF, P. (ed.), *Reason and Religion in Socratic Philosophy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, 115-129; HUMPHREYS, S., *The Strangeness of Gods: historical perspectives on the interpretation of Athenian religion*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004, 56ff.; MCPHERRAN, M., The Gods and Piety in Plato's Republic, in: SANTAS, G. (ed.), *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2006, 84-103; ROBINSON, T. M., Presocratic Theology, in: CURD, P., GRAHAM, D. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Presocratic Philosophy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008, 484-498; SERRANITO, F., Gods Old and New: Echoes of a New

however, does not disturb the transition to the palinode in any way whatever. There is no mention of this as being in any way problematic. It is, however, a contentious issue, an issue that could, in fact, derail the dialogical sequence that will lead us to the palinode.

The charge of εὐήθεια is intrinsically connected with the charge of ἀσέβεια. Lysias, Phaedrus and Socrates are foolish or stupid because they ignore the true nature of the gods. This ignorance makes them say foolish and stupid things about them, e.g., that they are the cause of harm for mankind. By blaming a god for something harmful, they are at the same time making a display of their own profound stupidity and offending the deity. They are blasphemous because they are stupid and they are stupid because they ignore this simple truth about the gods: they do no harm.

The charge of stupidity and blasphemy against our trio of characters can also be extended to the long and well-established poetical and mythological tradition that prevailed at the time. If Lysias, Phaedrus and Socrates are stupid and blasphemous, so are Homer and Hesiod, so are Sophocles, Aeschylus and Euripides and the great majority of the poets. This very specific kind of blasphemy puts Lysias, Phaedrus and Socrates in very prestigious company.

This poetic tradition is even invoked by Socrates to explain his own fears. In 243a4ff, Socrates contrasts Homer with Stesichorus in a very peculiar way[227]. He draws upon the traditional representation of Homer as a blind man and comes up with an aetiological myth to explain that blindness. Homer lost his sight as a punishment for having slandered Helen, who was worshiped as a goddess amongst the Spartans. Homer's blindness was his punishment for having committed blasphemy. It is interesting to note the parallel between these two figures, Eros and Helen. Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world, was, according to Homer, the cause of a major war, the deaths of countless warriors, the destruction of a once great city, due to the power of her erotic attractiveness. It was because she was so beautiful, so attractive, so irresistible that all these disasters

"Theology" in Plato's *Phaedrus*, in HEATH, M., GREEN, C. T., SERRANITO, F. (ed.), *Religion and Belief: A Moral Landscape*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014, 29-56.

[227] See WOODBURY, L, Helen and the Palinode, *Phoenix* 21, (1967) 157-176; SIDER, D., The Blinding of Stesichorus, *Hermes* 117 (1989), 423-31; ALFONSO, F. d', Stesicoro corale nelle due principal testimonianze sulla "Palinodia" (Isocr. Hel. 64; Plat. Phaedr. 243a), *Helikon* 33-34 (1993-1994), 419-429; DEMOS, M., Stesichorus' Palinode in the Phaedrus, *The Classical World* 90 (1996-1997), 235-249; BEECROFT, A., "This Is Not a True Story": Stesichorus's "Palinode" and the Revenge of the Epichoric, *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 136 (2006), 47-69.

befell upon Trojans and Greeks. It was also because she was so unable to control her urges that she was seduced by Paris, therefore starting the war. Helen is the perfect example of a human being whose life was wholly defined and determined by ἔρως and the sequence of events that resulted from her abduction is the perfect example of the destructive effect of ἔρως. Even if we ignore the fact that Helen was a goddess for the Spartans, accusing Helen of being the cause of the Trojan War was already an accusation against ἔρως or Aphrodite. But since Helen was not considered a goddess by Homer, nor was his conception of the gods incompatible with them being the cause of harm to mortals, he was unable to recognise that what he was saying was blasphemy. He became blind and he was unable to understand that his blindness was a punishment for something he had done wrong, because he could not recognise that he had done something wrong. His physical blindness reflects the inability to understand the meaning of his own actions and his ignorance regarding the subject of which he is a reputed authority. Stesichorus is also punished with blindness for slandering Helen in one of his poems. But, unlike Homer, he understands the cause of his blindness. He recognizes the committed blasphemy and that the only way to recover his sight is to retract his previous statement on Helen. That is the origin of Stesichorus' *Palinode*, in which he provides a version of the events that led to the Trojan War that does not assign blame to Helen. The fact that he is able not only to understand his own situation, but also to find a remedy for his injury reveals his superiority over Homer.

Stesichorus is the example to be followed, he is wiser than Homer. But Socrates pretends to be even wiser (243b3ff.): he wants to avoid punishment altogether by providing a pre-emptive retraction before the god strikes[228]. The palinode, however, is more than a mere retraction of previous statements, with the overt intention of avoiding punishment. The religious tone that dominates the transition from Socrates' first speech to Socrates' second speech can also be found in the fact that the palinode is introduced as

[228] 243b3ff.: "ἐγὼ οὖν σοφώτερος ἐκείνων γενήσομαι κατ᾽ αὐτό γε τοῦτο: πρὶν γάρ τι παθεῖν διὰ τὴν τοῦ Ἔρωτος κακηγορίαν πειράσομαι αὐτῷ ἀποδοῦναι τὴν παλινῳδίαν, γυμνῇ τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ οὐχ ὥσπερ τότε ὑπ᾽ αἰσχύνης ἐγκεκαλυμμένος." There is an implicit reference here to the relation between learning and suffering, παθεῖν/μαθεῖν, and how some, like Stesichorus, need to suffer in order to learn, while others, like Socrates, learn even without suffering. See, for example, DÖRRIE, H., *Leid und Erfahrung*. Die Wort- und Sinn-Verbindung παθεῖν/ μαθεῖν im griechischen Denken, Wiesbaden, Steiner, 1956 (Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur in Mainz, Geistes. und Sozialwissenschaftliche Klasse, 1956); NEITZEL, H., πάθει μάθος, Leitwort der aischyleischen Tragödie?, *Gymnasium* 87 (1980), 283-293; MAŚLANKA, S. M., La legge del pathei mathos nel Prometeo incatenato di Eschilo, *Sandalion* 12-13 (1989-1990), 5-25.

a form of purification. The blasphemy, the offense made to the god, leaves a mark, a pollution that needs to be cleansed. The use of language related to purification (243a3-4) attests to the explicit seriousness of what is at stake[229]. Socrates cannot leave without first making atonement or expiating (242c2) his fault[230]. The need for a retraction is also the need to cleanse himself, to purify himself, from the pollution caused by the blasphemy he has uttered. Since the pollution was caused by a speech, it seems appropriate that the purification will be done through a speech, following the example of Stesichorus. The metaphor Socrates uses is of clean water washing away salt water from one's ear (243d4)[231]. The previous speeches about ἔρως were, as salt water, improper for human consumption, in other words, poisonous. The next speech, the palinode, the retraction, will cancel out the detrimental effects of the blasphemy and cleanse away the damage already done.

We have seen so far that there is an important connection between εὐήθεια and ἀσέβεια, and that this connection is grounded on a particular "theological" understanding that might be considered outside of the mainstream of ancient Greek culture. But, in addition to the religious element, Socrates invokes another important value to justify the need for a retraction: reputation or social standing. The previous speech is not only untrue, stupid and blasphemous; it is also shameful. The previous speech is a source of αἰσχύνη for Socrates – that is the reason why he had to cover his head (243b6). But that does not necessarily mean that Socrates has changed his perspective on this matter. He felt ashamed of what he was about to say before he started his speech (237a4-5). He might have been one of the partners in blasphemy, but he always portrayed himself as a reluctant one. So shame has been, from the start, an important element to understand the status and role of Socrates' first speech. Socrates uses very similar phrases in both passages: "Ἐγκαλυψάμενος ἐρῶ, ἵνα ὅτι τάχιστα διαδράμω τὸν λόγον καὶ μὴ βλέπων πρὸς σέ ὑπ' αἰσχύνης διαπορῶμαι" (237a2); "γυμνῇ τῇι κεφαλῆι καί οὐχ ὥσπερ τότε ὑπ' αἰσχύνης ἐγκεκαλυμμένος" (243b6). The parallel between the two passages is evident. But now shame acquires a new importance and a new meaning. Socrates overt criticism of Lysias' speech concentrates on what we would call its rhetorical aspect. Socrates does not explicitly criticize the content of the speech, nor its main thesis. He draws fire on the

[229] "ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν, ὦ φίλε, καθήρασθαι ἀνάγκη· ἔστιν δὲ τοῖς ἁμαρτάνουσι περὶ μυθολογίαν καθαρμὸς ἀρχαῖος"
[230] "ἥ με οὐκ ἐᾷ ἀπιέναι πρὶν ἂν ἀφοσιώσωμαι, ὡς δή τι ἡμαρτηκότα εἰς τὸ θεῖον"
[231] "ἐπιθυμῶ ποτίμῳ λόγῳ οἷον ἁλμυρὰν ἀκοὴν ἀποκλύσασθαι"

aspect Phaedrus seems to value the most: the language used. It is this criticism of the use of language by Lysias that leads Phaedrus to issue his rhetorical challenge to Socrates, who is then forced to make up his own speech on the matter.[232] The main thesis of Lysias' speech remains untouched and constitutes the most important element of continuity between Lysias' and Socrates' first speech.

We might be forgiven for interpreting Socrates' shame before his first speech as being caused by the content of the speech itself. It is natural to assume that much, especially when we think about that in hindsight, in the light of everything that leads towards Socrates' retraction. But, if we read the interlude between Lysias' and Socrates' first speech while trying to ignore what is going to happen next, i.e., if we try to adopt the point of view that the character Phaedrus would have at this moment in the dialogue, the meaning of the shame at stake in that passage changes substantially. The shame Socrates mentions in 237a4-5, the shame that makes him cover his head, would be interpreted as being caused by Socrates self-avowed inferiority in rhetorical skill. That seems to be the deciding element at this stage: Socrates is ashamed of his lack of rhetorical skill, especially when compared to whom is, after all, the most famous writer of his time (236d3). But now, after the intervention of the divine sign, the shame Socrates feels is not related to his putative lack of skill. Socrates' speech has actually surpassed Lysias' in that respect. Now the shame is about the content, about the ideas put forward and so adeptly defended by both speakers. Socrates now reinterprets the shame he previously felt - or, if you prefer, reveals the true meaning of it. Now the speeches themselves, in the way they describe ἔρως, are considered shameful and disrespectful (243c1-2)[233].

[232] One could argue that the reference to the "παλαιοὶ καὶ σοφοὶ ἄνδρες τε καὶ γυναῖκες" (235b5) and, especially, the reference to great erotic poets Sappho and Anacreon (235c1ss.) is an indirect allusion to the objections Socrates might have regarding the content of the speech. It is, in fact, reasonable to assume that the evocation of these poets is meant to draw our attention to the theses on ἔρως defended by Lysias' speech. But to think that this constitutes an indirect objection to those same theses is far from a straightforward interpretation. Anacreon and Sappho are great erotic poets, but their views on ἔρως are far from being overwhelmingly positive. The way they describe it is much more ambivalent. In any case, for both these poets, ἔρως is responsible for a multiplicity of evils and miseries in human life. This fact alone would be enough to include them in the poetic tradition criticized by Socrates for asserting that gods can, in effect, do harm. It would therefore be reasonable to understand the reference to these poets not as an indirect objection to the thesis defended by Lysias, but as examples of people that were much more skilled at describing the negative effects of love, therefore reinforcing the idea that what is at stake here is the 'rhetorical element' and not the content of the speech as such. This interpretation has the additional advantage of making this reference an anticipation of what Socrates is going to achieve with his first speech: a much more elaborate, persuasive and well-composed ψόγος of ἔρως. However, one cannot and should not lose sight of the possibility that the ambiguity towards ἔρως that characterises lyric poetry is meant to reverberate throughout the interlude between Lysias' and Socrates' first speech – and beyond.

[233] "καὶ γάρ, ὠγαθὲ Φαῖδρε, ἐννοεῖς ὡς ἀναιδῶς εἴρησθον τὼ λόγω, οὗτός τε καὶ ὁ ἐκ τοῦ βιβλίου ῥηθείς."

To explain how shameful they are, Socrates presents a contrast between two perspectives on ἔρως. The first of these perspectives is the one the reader is already familiar with from Lysias' and Socrates' first speech: the perspective that sees ἔρως as harmful and shameful. The second perspective is introduced by means of a character, an anonymous man, τις, that is described as γεννάδας καὶ πρᾷος τὸ ἦθος (243c2). This characterisation is fundamental for what is at stake in this passage. By describing him in such positive terms, Socrates is asserting his superiority to the ones that hold the opposite perspective. But this superiority does not seem to be, at least at first glance, of a cognitive nature. He is superior socially and in his character. He is noble, someone to be admired. The categories at stake here are mainly social; the contrast is between the noble, social superior to those free man that are at the bottom of the social scale: the sailors. It is a well-known historical fact that the division of tasks within the Athenian military was determined according to economic means, since it was up to the individual citizen to buy his own equipment. The wealthiest, i.e., those who could afford a horse, would be part of the cavalry. The next wealthiest, i.e., those who could afford armour, would be hoplites. The poorest, i.e., those who could not afford armour, would serve as sailors. The difference between these social strata is more than just economical. From the point of view of those who belong to the upper strata - or those who identify themselves with them –, i.e., most of the sources available to us, the members of the lower stratum, "the sailors", were looked down upon as rude, ignorant, and unworthy. For the purposes of this study, it is irrelevant if such view was accurate or fair. What matters is that associating someone with such a group would have the effect of diminishing that person's standing and credibility.

And it is precisely that what Socrates does with Lysias, Phaedrus and himself, as the author of the second ψόγος of ἔρως. The perspective that sustained Lysias' speech, previously so lavishly praised and admired by its wit and cleverness, is now put at the same level as the gross utterances of the lowest of the low. But this is more than just a mere insult or an attack on Lysias' and Phaedrus' precious pride. The fact that Socrates attributes an alternative perspective to someone described as noble and gentle is not simply a ploy to suggest that Lysias and Phaedrus are socially and intellectually inferior – though that is an important element of it. In fact, by introducing this character, Socrates is introducing a harsh judge of what has been said so far. Here we have a man that is praiseworthy in every respect looking down with contempt upon what has been said so

far and upon those who said it. It is an argument of authority Socrates is using, although the authority is anonymous. It is also an interesting bit of psychological manipulation he uses, suggesting that Lysias, Phaedrus and himself should be ashamed of what they said.

At a much more basic level, the simple fact that Socrates presents a second perspective at all is, probably, the most relevant aspect of this passage. It shatters the unanimity and unilateral deformation of the theses regarding ἔρως we have dealt with so far in the previous speeches. There are, however, several ways of assessing the meaning and importance of this second perspective. Simply taken, the noble and gentle man's perspective can be seen as the opposite of the sailors' perspective. Socrates seems to endorse the former and reject the latter. Therefore, we are simply before a situation where a wrong thesis is replaced by a correct one, at least from Socrates' point of view. Roughly put, Lysias, Phaedrus and Socrates, in his first speech, say, with "the sailors", that love is horrid; the noble and gentle man reminds us that love is a thing of beauty. He is right; they are wrong: love is really a thing of beauty. Therefore, Socrates' task is to defend this last thesis against the previous accusations. What we would have, then, is a mere substitution of a thesis by its opposite.

However, the case is much more complex than this. The noble and gentle man asserts the opposite of the sailors, but in a very specific way. First of all, the noble and gentle man is not an impartial judge. He is or once was in love. If he still is in love, he will be necessarily biased towards love, even according to the terms of the previous speeches. Also according to the terms of the previous speeches, being in love is incompatible with being φρόνιμος, as well as with being noble and gentle. The judgement made by such a man could therefore be put in doubt. But none of this is even hinted at in this passage. We are to take his perspective as not only being φρόνιμος, but as the perspective from which we should judge the previous speeches. The fact that the lover is now the φρόνιμος is already a great departure from the perspectives drawn in the previous speeches.

But the second and most important aspect of this second perspective can be seen if we look attentively at how it is introduced. We have already mentioned that the bearer of this perspective, albeit anonymous, has a specific character: he is noble and gentle. He is also a lover, and is or has been in love with someone of the same character. By describing the man and his beloved in these terms, Socrates is putting forward an example

of erotic relationship in stark contrast to what Lysias' and his first speech described. The noble and gentle lover cannot recognise himself in those descriptions and looks upon them with contempt. But the adjectives that describe the lover and his beloved are also restrictive clauses. The attitude of contempt the man has towards the sailors is only justified inasmuch as his erotic relationship is different; and it is different due to his specific character. What Socrates is referring to is a different kind of ἔρως from the one described before. This is certain. But it is a kind of ἔρως that does not and cannot deny the other kind's existence. As there is a noble and gentle kind of love, there is also a degrading and harmful kind. There are, therefore, two kinds of ἔρως: a noble kind, which Socrates is trying to defend, and an ignoble one, which is the one actually attacked by Lysias[234]. What Lysias and Socrates himself did was to take ἔρως as if it were of only one kind, mingling the two very different kinds and, by attacking the ignoble kind, condemning the noble kind as well. That probably neither of them was, at that moment, aware of the dual nature of ἔρως only shows the depth of their εὐήθεια. Considering the dual nature of ἔρως, their ἀσέβεια would consist in the fact that they were unable to distinguish between a divine kind of ἔρως, necessarily beneficial according to the theological assumptions of Socrates, and a non-divine kind of ἔρως, the one that might, actually, deserve the blame bestowed upon it by the previous speeches.

This description of dual ἔρως will certainly look somewhat familiar to anyone who has read the *Symposium*. A similar distinction is the basic premise of Pausanias' speech: a distinction between two kinds of ἔρως and two Aphrodites (*Symp.* 180d4-5). As with this passage of the *Phaedrus,* Pausanias speech draws the distinction between the two Aphrodites along social lines: one of them is Πάνδημος, 'popular'; the other, Οὐρανία, carries all the aristocratic overtones that are common in pederastic speech. Only the latter one is to be defended and praised by Pausanias, while the other is deemed to be justly blamed[235]. Ἔρως cannot be blamed or praised ἁπλῶς for the simple reason that it is not simple or unified in its nature. It is a complex force, which can only be properly

[234] On dual ἔρως and the tradition of two kinds of x, see chapter I, p. 58, note 28, above.

[235] A very salient feature of Pausanias' distinction is not made explicit in this passage of the Phaedrus: the exclusively male homoerotic nature of the divine kind of love as opposed to the truly indiscriminate nature of the erotic attachment of the 'lower' kind of love. However, considering the rarity of any heterosexual relationship or desire mentioned in this dialogue, and its pederastic context, it is safe to assume that what we are dealing with are, in fact, male homoerotic relationships. In any case, it is hard to see how the gender of the object of erotic desire might influence the nature of the desire itself, apart from what derives from the prejudices and well-known anti-feminine bias of Ancient Greek culture.

understood and assessed when taking into account its complexity. It is by introducing the idea that ἔρως is complex that Pausanias can find space to fit his praise. The all-encompassing and sweeping blame usually attached to ἔρως is replaced by a detailed and discerning account of it. This seems to derive also from a claim of intellectual superiority. It is a mark of intelligence to recognise and understand complex and subtle distinctions with care and detail. General judgments are the mark of an inferior intellect. This also adds to the aristocratic overtones of Pausanias' speech, overtones that it shares with the passage of the *Phaedrus* we have been analysing. This being said, the similarities between these two texts do not necessarily imply that one has been inspired by the other, whichever which came first. It rather seems that both drew from what probably was a rather familiar pederastic τόπος, quite useful when one has in hand the difficult task of justifying not simply ἔρως, but specifically this very specific and distinctive kind of erotic attachment.

However, any defence of ἔρως in these terms, regardless of how passionate, persuasive or even truthful it might be, starts with a concession to the adversary in the very form of the distinction between itself and other forms of erotic attachment. Regardless of how much emphasis is put in the adversative clause, it is always in the form of a "yes, but...". In this context, we can see that, in a way, the palinode's initial intentions are relatively modest. There is no intention of providing an unrestricted praise of ἔρως ἁπλῶς, but rather of a very specific kind of ἔρως.

2. The first three kinds of beneficial μανία

Until this point in the *Phaedrus,* μανία has been universally seen as harmful and shameful. It is therefore very strange that in order to defend ἔρως, a phenomenon that, although generally unloved, has seen its fair share of apologists, Socrates chooses to explicitly associate it with μανία. The fact that he chooses to do so demands a very specific rhetorical strategy: a strategy that will consist in emphasizing an up until now not mentioned duality in the nature of μανία. The dual nature of μανία echoes the dual nature of ἔρως alluded to in the interlude that leads on to the palinode. The idea that ἔρως is a form of μανία pervades the previous speeches. It is, however, an idea that is only explicitly articulated by Socrates at the beginning of the palinode. After this explicit articulation, this basic thesis will become the fundamental hypothesis of the whole palinode.

The palinode is introduced as a refutation of the previous speeches. Socrates wants to show that a boy should choose a suitor who is in love with him, contrary to what is stated in the previous speeches. The refutation, however, does not follow what we could call a point-by-point itinerary. Rather, Socrates attacks the kernel of the argument of both previous speeches, or, at least, what he himself, as the speaker of the palinode, identifies as that kernel. According to the palinode, the reason put forward by the other speeches to sustain their fundamental thesis was that: "ὁ [sc. ἐρῶν] μὲν μαίνεται, ὁ [sc. μὴ ἐρῶν] δὲ σωφρονεῖ" (244a5). This diagnosis transfers the centre of the argument from a question regarding ἔρως as such to a question regarding μανία and σωφροσύνη. Ἔρως is no longer considered as an isolated phenomenon, but rather as a species of a phenomenon of wider scope, μανία. This is already anticipated by both the previous speeches, in a way or another, but never until now has this been declared in such a direct and doubtless way. This is the first time that μανία is explicitly presented as the core of the arguments of the previous speeches. But the palinode goes further. The main argument Lysias and the pre-palinode Socrates presented, the centre of their argument, consisted in the understanding that μανία was something simply and utterly evil. This idea feeds on an extensive and rich cultural tradition, and to understand μανία as a ruinous event is not a peculiarity of the previous speeches.

It is this idea that Socrates will start to refute. The programme seems to be set forth at this very early stage in the palinode: first, Socrates will present exceptions to the evil nature of μανία; then, Socrates will show that the kind of μανία corresponding to ἔρως is, in fact, one of these exceptions. But it is not enough to show that there are instances of μανία that are not harmful and that ἔρως is one of them. Socrates' purpose is not to simply show that ἔρως is a neutral phenomenon, one that does neither good nor harm. Nor is his purpose to show that ἔρως is just one among a multiplicity of moderately good phenomena. He wants to show something much more difficult to prove in the cultural context he is dealing with: that ἔρως is superlatively good, that it constitutes the greatest blessing. To satisfy such a difficult purpose, he needs to show that μανία, in certain circumstances, can be useful and beneficial. He does not only propose to demonstrate that there is some good arising from some forms of μανία, but he goes as far as to state that, in fact, the greatest goods arise from μανία (244a6-7)[236]. Μανία is not

[236] "εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν ἁπλοῦν τὸ μανίαν κακὸν εἶναι, καλῶς ἂν ἐλέγετο: νῦν δὲ τὰ μέγιστα τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἡμῖν γίγνεται διὰ μανίας, θείᾳ μέντοι δόσει διδομένης."

always evil; sometimes it is good; sometimes it is even the source of the greatest good. To prove his point, Socrates will invoke examples of the beneficial kinds of μανία. As we have seen in the previous section, the idea that there are kinds of μανία that are, in fact, beneficial, is tied up with two fundamental ideas: first, that the gods, being gods, can do no harm, and secondly, that there are kinds of μανία that are of divine origin. We have already dealt with the first of these ideas. As to the second, it is interesting to note that it is Socrates who actually explicitly introduces the idea of a divine origin of μανία, and that he is the one who uses it as an explicit argument in one of the speeches. The direct cause of these phenomena were traditionally attributed to the gods, or at least the gods were normally understood to be very much involved. But this idea has been strangely absent or silent in the *Phaedrus* up to this point in the dialogue.

The ancient tradition that views ἔρως and μανία as the result of some kind of divine intervention seems to be either absent from or just implied in Lysias' speech. This idea is not even mentioned in Socrates' first speech – and one can even argue that he tries to present an "etiological" account of love there, which is more akin to medical than mythical and poetical discourse. Maintaining the thesis of the complete goodness of the gods, an instance of μανία that is caused by a god cannot be but good. More than that, μανία itself and that which results from it can be seen as a gift from the gods, a θεία δόσις. Socrates' innovation will consist in combining the idea of the divine origin of μανία, with the idea of the intrinsic goodness of the gods[237]. By stating this, Socrates will show that the idea of beneficial madness is not only already present in his own culture, but is also an important, even fundamental part of it. For that, he will present several instances of culturally significant institutions and traditions that are understood as relying on some kind of madness[238]. By showing that there are fundamental aspects of the Greek cultural tradition that are based on a positive and useful contribution of μανία, Socrates is

[237] The positive connotation of the idea of a god given μανία depends on the assumption that the gods are good. Otherwise something like a θεία μανία, as the phenomenon is described in 256b6, 265a10-11 and 265b2, would be understood in a completely different way. Contrast, for example, with how Ajax' mania (or nosos) is described as θεία in SOPHOCLES, *Ajax* 185, 611. In that context, there is no positive connotation in the word θεία.

[238] See FERRARI, G. R. F., *Listening to the Cicadas*: a study of Plato's Phaedrus, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987, 113ff; GUIDORIZZI, G., *Ai confini dell' anima*. I Greci e la follia, Milano, Cortina, 2010, 76ff.. See also PADEL, R., *Whom Gods Destroy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1995, 82: "The idea that madness brought anything as positive as "blessings" comes primarily from Plato, from the *Phaedrus*. It is Greek, in that it is written by a Greek. But it did not represente its culture's beliefs even then." See also VOGT, K. M., Plato on Madness and the Good Life, in HARRIS, W. (ed.), *Mental Disorders in the Classical World*, Leiden, Brill, 2013, 177-192.

preparing the way for something much harder to prove: that ἔρως is also superlatively beneficial.

3. Μανία προφητική or μαντική

The first example of beneficial μανία Socrates presents in the palinode has to do with prophecy and divination (244b1ff.)[239]. The examples he gives of people overcome by this kind of madness are illustrative of what he is talking about: the Pythia at Delphi, the Sybil and the priestesses of Dodona. These figures were all very well known for their roles in the several oracles that dotted the Ancient Greek religious landscape. They were of fundamental importance in Greek religious ritual. Oracles permeated ancient Greek life. They were consulted by everyone, from the statesman considering if he should

[239] On the role of prophecy and divination, see, for example: HALLIDAY, W. R., *Greek Divination*, London, McMillan, 1913, 75-76; ROHDE, *op. cit.*, II 20ff., 56ff., 89ff.; PARKE, H. W., *The Delphic oracle*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1939; LATTE, K., The Coming of the Pythia, *Harvard Theological Review* 33 (1940), 9-18; AMANDRY P., *La mantique apollinienne à Delphes*. Essai sur le fonctionnement de l'oracle, Paris, de Boccard, 1950; CILENTO, V., L'oracolo degli uomini, *La parola del passato* 6, (1951), 161-181; SMITH, W. D., So-Called Possession in Pre-Christian Greece, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 96 (1965), 403-426; SAOS R. O., Sobre los oráculos griegos, *Revista de estúdios clássicos* 10 (1966), 101-130; DODDS, E. R., *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley & Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1951, 72-75; VICAIRE P., Platon et la divination, *Révue des Études Grecques* 83 (1970), 333-350; CASTRO SMOLKA, N. C. de, O papel do oráculo na vida grega, *Língua e Literatura* 1 (1972), 173-184; CALVO MARTÍNEZ J. L., Sobre la mania y el entusiasmo, *Emerita* 41 (1973), 157-182, especially 174ff.; LLOYD-JONES, H., The Delphic oracle, *Greece & Rome* 23 (1976), 60-73; PIÑERO SÁENZ, A., Sobre Homero y el entusiasmo mántico, *Estudios Clásicos* 20 (1976), 3-8; PRICE, S., Delphi and divination, in: EASTERLING P. E., MUIR J. V. (ed.), *Greek religion and society*, Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, 128-154; DIETRICH, B. C., Oracles and divine inspiration, *Kernos* 3 (1990), 157-174; CASEVITZ, M., Mantis : le vrai sens, *Révue des Études Grecques* 105 (1992), 1-18; CHIESA, C., Socrate devin : figures de la divination dans le Phèdre, in: ROSSETTI, L. (ed.), *Understanding the Phaedrus* : proceedings of the II Symposium Platonicum, Sankt Augustin, Academia-Verlag, 1992, 313-319; DIETRICH, B. C., Divine madness and conflict at Delphi, *Kernos* 5 (1992), 41-58; MAURIZIO, L., Anthropology and spirit possession: a reconsideration of the Pythia's role at Delphi, *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 115 (1995), 69-86; LÉVY, E., Devins et oracles chez Hérodote, in HEINTZ, J.-G. (ed.), *Oracles et prophéties dans l'antiquité* : actes du colloque de Strasbourg, 15-17 juin 1995, Paris, Boccard, 1997, 345-365; JOUANNA, J., Oracles et devins chez Sophocle, *ibidem*, 345-365; SHENFIELD, L., Plato's μανία at Delphi again?, *Pegasus* 41 (1998), 15-24; DI SACCO FRANCO, M. T., Les devins chez Homère : essai d'analyse, *Kernos* 13 (2000), 35-46; PIEPER, J., *Enthusiasm and Divine Madness*, South Bend, Indiana, St. Augustine's Press, 2000, 52ff.; BOWDEN, H., *Classical Athens and the Delphic oracle*: divination and democracy, Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2005; JOHNSTON, S. I., *Ancient Greek Divination*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008; SUÁREZ DE LA TORRE, E., Oracle et norme religieuse en Grèce ancienne, in: BRULÉ, P. (ed.), *La norme en matière religieuse en Grèce ancienne* : actes du XIe colloque du CIERGA (Rennes, septembre 2007), Liège, Centre International d'Étude de la Religion Grecque Antique, 2009, 107-124; GREEN, P., Possession and pneuma: the essential nature of the Delphic Oracle, *Arion* 17 (2009-2010), 27-47. See also, on this specific passage: THOMPSON, *op. cit.*, *ad locum*; HACKFORTH, *op. cit.*, 58-59; VERDENIUS, W. J., Der Begriff der Mania in Platons Phaidros, *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 44 (1962), 34-44; DE VRIES, *op. cit.*, *ad locum*; ROWE, *op. cit.*, *ad locum*; PADEL (1995), 82-83; SALA, *op. cit.*, 130-132; GUIDORIZZI, *op. cit.*, 94ff.; YUNIS, *op. cit.*, *ad locum*. See also *Timaeus* 71eff.

embark in a military expedition to the farmer worried about his crops. They were used not only to tell the future – as one nowadays would probably assume – but mainly to confirm or deny a certain course of action or decision[240]. Human action resides in the realm of possibility. One has to choose from an indeterminate number of different possibilities, with uncertain and obscure results. No human action happens in a void. No human action is isolated. Every single one of them adds to a complex system of actions and reactions, of circumstances and situations, that go far beyond what one single human being, at any given point, can grasp. Human knowledge does not normally comprehend the complexity of this set of possibilities and cannot follow all the implications that might arise from a single decision. In this sense, human life is limited to only access reality within a very restricted angle.

In the context of Ancient Greek culture, the oracles were used as a way out of this restricted angle, as a way to break the limits of ordinary human perspective, as a mechanism to fight against the uncertainty of life. The fact that this goes beyond what human beings are normally able to do means that, in order to have some credibility, such mechanism would need to be beyond normal, would have to draw from a source that surpasses human knowledge and power. Also, we have to take into account that the outcome of human actions not only is hidden from us, but also is beyond our control. It is beyond our grasp in two ways: in what concerns our ability to understand it, and in what concerns our power to control it. Both aspects are related and reinforce each other. Since one does not know what will happen, one cannot act to influence the outcome. And the fact that one cannot guide the course of events introduces another layer of enigma to what will result from this. This feeling of ignorance and powerlessness makes the use of oracles seem a quite reasonable course of action – provided, of course, that one believes in the existence and power of beings such as the Greek gods. Not only are the oracles a means to communicate with beings whose knowledge far surpasses that of men, but also these same beings are so much more powerful than us that they actually influence those circumstances that are beyond our control. In this context, oracles functioned as points of stability and security in an otherwise uncertain and dangerous world.

[240] However, the idea of predicting the future was not entirely excluded, as we can see from Socrates' mention of "τὸ μέλλον κρίνεται" (244c1). One should not ignore the fact that the approval or disapproval of a certain course of action implies a certain ability to predict the future, as we would understand it. The answer to the question "should I do X?" is also, and maybe fundamentally, a question about the consequences of doing X.

But oracles require some sort of contact or communication with the gods. This contact or communication with the gods was not an ordinary occurrence. There is no direct line of communication with the gods that might be used to guide one through life. Mortals might communicate with the gods through religious rituals, sacrifices and prayers, and the gods may communicate with mortals indirectly, e.g., through signs that require interpretation, or, in the case of some religions, even through sacred writings. But direct, day-to-day, detailed communication and guidance is something that seems to be excluded from most religious traditions. Such was the case of Ancient Greek tradition. Communication with the gods required a specific setting and specific circumstances. It was an extraordinary event that required extraordinary people in extraordinary circumstances. It was a specialised activity, only exercised by a few. These few transmitted knowledge that, in normal circumstances, one could not have access to.

There is one example in extant Greek literature that can show us vividly the exceptional character of the knowledge imparted by the oracles: the test King Croesus of Lydia submitted the various oracles to in order to ascertain their reliability[241]. This test consisted in interrogating the various oracles about what he would do at a specific moment in time. What he did was so out of the ordinary, so difficult to predict at random that only true knowledge could allow an oracle to predict it. The Pythia was the only one to get it right, so it was the Pythia that Croesus asked for advice. The fact that that advice had disastrous consequences for Croesus was then explained not by any fault or defect of the oracle, but rather by an error in the interpretation of the oracle by Croesus. The oracle is reliable; the Pythia is the mouthpiece of Apollo. But Croesus, as a mere mortal whose contact with the gods can only be indirect, is liable to make mistakes and fail, even when he thinks he is following divine advice.

The Pythia is probably the most notorious example of the phenomenon Socrates is alluding to. That her activity is understood under the category of μανία is not surprising. She, a mere mortal, imparted knowledge that she could not have access to, e.g., the consequences of a future action. There was something excessive about what she said and what she did, something that exceed any mortal's ability. It was because she served as the spokesperson of the god, because the god spoke through her that she was consulted. As a mere mortal, she was unimportant and of little consequence. What made her important

[241] See HERODOTUS, I.46ff.

was that she, for some reason, was the vessel through which the god spoke to other mortals. She was the passive channel through which the god communicated. She apparently had no control over the process and she herself was unable to interpret the meaning of her own words. That Croesus was the one to interpret the oracle was no exception. The Pythia was only the spokesperson. The interpretation of the oracle was, in a preliminary moment, the task of certain priests of the sanctuary of Delphi and then it was up to those who consulted the oracle to figure out how the oracle fit with the situation they were facing. The knowledge the prophet has is limited to what the god says. She had to be in a state of trance, in a state of delirium, out of herself, in order to fulfil her role.

The same can be said about other instances of prophetic activity (e.g., the case of Cassandra; though not every single one, e.g., Tiresias). The prophet is no longer him or herself at the moment of prophecy. He loses himself, being overtaken by the god. A force mightier and wiser than the prophet speaks through him. This is an instance of μανία, as much, apparently, as erotic μανία (as understood in the previous speeches), or as μανία as a disease. The μαινόμενος loses control; the μαινόμενος acts in an odd way; the μαινόμενος sees in a different way. The extravagance of prophecy is akin to the extravagance of μανία. But this is a form of μανία that brings something special with it: it brings knowledge, giving an important contribution to the good of the community. It brings forth a kind of knowledge that breaks the limits of ordinary knowledge. It is a form of μανία that can be rightly understood as a blessing from the gods, since it helps navigate the multiple difficulties and uncertainties of life. The relationship between prophets like the Pythia and φρονεῖν is paradoxical. On the one hand, the Pythia, being overcome with μανία, does not have φρονεῖν. But, on the other hand, the end result of the Pythia's activity corresponds to what would result from φρονεῖν. What one obtains from prophetic activity is knowledge, a perspective that is closer to the ideal of φρονεῖν, seeing things as they really are. One uses μανία to become φρόνιμος, in a context where being φρόνιμος, in the normal, mundane sense of the word, is not enough[242].

[242] The etymological παιδιά in 244c (μανική/μαντική) brings to our attention the relationship between this kind of μανία and its respective τέχνη. Since τέχνη is a form of specialized knowledge, that implies and requires power and self-control, the opposition between μανία and τέχνη emphasizes the paradoxical relationship between prophetic activity and φρονεῖν. This relationship will be dealt with further in a subsequent section. See HACKFORTH, *op. cit.*, 59.

4. Μανία τελεστική

The second kind of beneficial madness will also have to be understood as part of Ancient Greek cultural traditional. However, unlike prophetic and poetic μανίαι, it is far from clear what specific cultural tradition Socrates is referring to. The μανία τελεστική is introduced and explained with a single, rather convoluted sentence. Details about it are piled up, but never properly explained. The text itself (244d6ff) is of doubtful fixation, and was written in such a convoluted Greek as to make any interpretation very difficult[243]. Even the name chosen to designate this kind of madness is doubtful and relies on an association between what is described in this passage and Orphic rites of initiation[244], which is far from certain. There is a reference in the passage to τελεταί (244e1) that would justify the use of this designation, but, by the same token, one could as well call it μανία καθαρτική without any prejudice or hindrance to our understanding of it. In any case, we will use the designation of μανία τελεστική as a matter of convenience. In the end, we are not even graced with a specific, concrete example of what is at stake in this kind of μανία, nor, as is the case with the kinds of μανία that immediately precede and follow this one, are we provided with an example of a corresponding τέχνη. It is as if Socrates is referring to something so obvious as to dispense any further explanation, or to something as irrelevant to the overall rhetorical purpose as not to merit even a second sentence. The reference to μανία τελεστική is so brief, so sketchy and so vague that, had it followed poetic μανία in the order of exposition, instead of preceding it, and one would be almost forced to deem it as nothing more than a Platonic afterthought.

What this kind of μανία actually is has been the subject of considerable debate among scholars[245]. The benefit that comes from this kind of μανία seems to be some sort

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[243] "ἀλλὰ μὴν νόσων γε καὶ πόνων τῶν μεγίστων, ἃ δὴ παλαιῶν ἐκ μηνιμάτων ποθὲν ἔν τισι τῶν γενῶν ἡ μανία ἐγγενομένη καὶ προφητεύσασα, οἷς ἔδει ἀπαλλαγὴν ηὗρετο, καταφυγοῦσα πρὸς θεῶν εὐχάς τε καὶ λατρείας, ὅθεν δὴ καθαρμῶν τε καὶ τελετῶν τυχοῦσα ἐξάντη ἐποίησε τὸν ἑαυτῆς ἔχοντα πρός τε τὸν παρόντα καὶ τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον, λύσιν τῷ ὀρθῶς μανέντι τε καὶ κατασχομένῳ τῶν παρόντων κακῶν εὑρομένη."

[244] See BEKKER, *op. cit., ad locum*; AST, *op. cit., ad locum*; also HACKFORTH, *op. cit*., 59-60.

[245] How difficult this passage is has been eloquently expressed by WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORF, *Platon* I, Berlin, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1920, 411, n.1: "In Phaidros 214e (sic) wird eine ähnliche Wirkung von Weihungen und Sühnungen, die sich an alten Geschlechtern bewärht haben soll, als eine Art des heiligen Wahnsinns bezeichnet. Die verschiedene Beurteilung wird man gern ertragen; aber eine Erklärung habe ich nirgend gefunden und bin selbst ratlos." This perplexity is more or less shared by all critics, starting with the early 19th century scholars. See: BEKKER, *op. cit., ad locum*; AST, *op. cit., ad locum*; STALLBAUM, *op. cit., ad locum*; THOMPSON, *op. cit., ad locum*; HACKFORTH, *op. cit.*, ad locum; DE VRIES, *op. cit., ad locum*; ROWE, *op. cit., ad locum*; PADEL (1995), 83-84; SALA, *op. cit.*, 132ff.; YUNIS, *op. cit., ad locum*. See also: PFISTER, F., Der Wahsinn des Weihepriesters, *Cimbria*. Beiträge zur Geschichte, Altertumskunde, Kunst und Erziehungslehre, Dortmund 1926, 55-62, 55ff; DE

of curative process. The text starts by referring to diseases and sufferings, hereditary to certain lineages. What these diseases might be is far from clear, though the reference to certain γένη suggests they are hereditary in nature. Plus, the diseases are said to result παλαιῶν ἐκ μηνιμάτων, a phrase that directly echoes a line of Euripides: "παλαιῶν Ἄρεος ἐκ μηνιμάτων"[246]. The implication seems to be that the diseases alluded to are the result of the wrath of the gods, descending down the generations in the same house, in a way not unlike the hereditary curses one can find plenty examples of in tragic literature. The

VRIES, *op. cit.*, *ad locum*. The difficulties regarding this passage and the nature of this kind of μανία are numerous. The first set of perplexities is textual, but these are closely associated with all the perplexities regarding the specific role μανία plays in it and, mostly, to what specific religious phenomenon Plato is alluding to. LINFORTH, I. M., Telestic Madness in Plato, Phaedrus 244de, *University of California Publications in Classical Philology* 13 (1946), 163-172 (see especially 164-167), goes through the textual difficulties in detail. The phrase "τὸν ἑαυτῆς ἔχοντα" offers particular difficulties. Pfister seems to have interpret the verb ἔχειν as "to touch", and used this interpretation as one of the bases for his view that the agent of this kind of μανία was a specific priest who, through contact with the afflicted individual, brought cure and relief. This priest would be the one possessing divine μανία, which the other participants in the ritual would not share. This, however, as Linforth argues, "is directly contrary to all we know about such enthusiastic ceremonies" (167-168). On these "enthusiastic ceremonies", see LINFORTH, I. M., Corybantic Rites in Plato, *University of California Publications in Classical Philology* 13 (1946), 121-162. Linforth's interpretation (170-172) goes without the intervention of any priest or priestly caste, but sees in Μανία herself, as a personified deity, the paramount role of εὑρετής of this particular form of healing. Μανία exerts her beneficial effect over the afflicted themselves, showing them, through some sort of prophetic intervention how they can be released from their troubles. HACKFORTH, *op. cit.*, 59-60, and DODDS, *op. cit.*, 75-80, mostly follow Linforth, although Dodds seems to emphasize more than Linforth the relationship between this form of μανία and the Dionisiac and Corybantic rituals. As to the specific religious phenomenon Plato may be referring to, Linforth (171) states: "One cannot resist the impression that the conceit has been freshly devised for the present occasion. The very vagueness of the language, as has been said, supports this view." Cf. PFISTER, *op. cit.*, and DELATTE A., Les conceptions de l'enthousiasme chez les philosophes présocratiques, *L'Antiquité Classique* 3, 1934, 5-79, especially 71. A more recent work, BALLÉRIAUX, O., Mantique et télestique dans le Phèdre de Platon, *Kernos* 3, 1990, 35-43, recovers the idea that Plato is alluding to a specific historical religious phenomenon, although with a twist. He objects to what he seems to regard as an almost perfect consensus amongst previous scholars, stating that: "Les interprétations dont j'ai cité les auteurs (in which he unduly includes Linforth) nous demandent toutes de considérer le quatrième sous-ensemble, celui des télestes, comme le seul à ne comprendre que quelques rares éléments, que nous devrions aller chercher dans un lointain passé, Mélampe, Épiménide, Pythagore pour les uns, pour les autres quelques Labdacides, Atrides ou Alcméonides, pour d'autres enfin des fondateurs de religions ou des créateurs de cultes orgiastiques, dont on devine bien qu'ils ne sont pas légion" (37-38). He roots the religious phenomenon this kind of μανία alludes to in the Orphic tradition of the "ἀγυρταὶ καὶ μάντεις" mentioned in *Republic* 364b: "Dans les siècles de foi, le rôle de ces télestes, de ces devins-exorcistes, était de délivrer de la malédiction divine les membres de certaines familles que l'on disait frappées en raison d'une culpabilité héritée d'un ancêtre. Avec les devins au sens habituel du terme, ces télestes devaient constituer ce que j'appellerais volontiers un clergé, si l'on veut bien bannir de ce mot toute idée de corps constitué, d'ordre, plus encore de caste, mais y voir seulement une manière commode de désigner l'ensemble des gens à qui s'adressent États et particuliers pour régler leurs relations avec la divinité" (42-43). See also VERDENIUS, *op. cit.*; PIEPER, *op. cit.*, 58ff.

[246] EURIPIDES, *Phoenissae*, 934. See AST, *op. cit.*, BEKKER, *op. cit.*, STALLBAUM, *op. cit.*, *ad locum*; PADEL (1995), 83. On parallel passages in extant Greek literature and also for a discussion of the meaning and translation of the phrase, see BALLÉRIAUX, *op. cit.*, 39-40. This quotation suggests that Socrates might have had a specific tragedy or myth in mind, but the search for it has be fruitless so far. LINFORTH, 169: "We must acknowledge that we do not know what legend Socrates had in mind, and I repeat that the vagueness of the relative clause, with ποθέν and τισί, and τισί in the plural, may really mean that he had no legend in mind."

association between these diseases and the wrath of the gods seems to go against the basic premise of the whole palinode, sc. that gods can do no harm. If μήνιμα means what we think it means and if we are correct in interpreting this passage as an allusion to tragic hereditary curses, then Plato has implanted at the heart of his initial argument for the beneficial character of some kinds of μανία what seems to be an unmitigated contradiction. But Socrates does not insist on this point and passes over it quickly and without any remark. It does not serve what we believe to be the overall purpose of this part of the palinode: to make the transition towards the ontological revolution at the heart of the exposition of erotic madness. For the purposes of the rhetorical manipulation needed to achieve this, Socrates cannot call too much attention to a detail like this[247]. Μανία comes, and through prophecy (244d7), shows a way of escaping from those diseases.

The way to deal with these diseases seems to be something that one cannot discover through merely mortal means – which is understandable, since these troubles were caused by the gods. One needs some sort of divine intervention to find out what needs to be done. The divine intervention at stake here is a form of μανία. In fact, this passage is written in such a way as to make μανία itself the subject of the actions portrayed. It is μανία that comes over and prophesises; it is μανία that shows what has to be done; it is μανία that finds the purifications and rituals that have to be performed, and it is μανία that puts the mad out of danger. The fact that μανία is the one that is said to be doing all of this just makes everything even more obscure. We can only guess what kind of rituals and purifications are alluded to here[248] or, for that matter, who actually is affected by the beneficial madness that discovers them.

The matter is so unclear as to make even the identity of the ones who are actually affected by beneficial μανία uncertain. Ast, for example, seems to believe that the certain families or lineages referred to in the text "*hoc videtur designare familias certas (...) sacerdotio praeditas et quasi sacras fuisse, et in his exsistisse qui praecipuam vaticinandi expiandique facultatem habuerint*"[249]. In this case, it would be the priest the one under

[247] This however makes us wonder why then did Plato decide to mention this form of madness at all. The other two would probably be enough for the modest purposes of this passage, and both are much more familiar and far less problematic. In none of them would we find this kind of contradiction; none of them shows so clearly the flaw of one of the basic premises behind the whole palinode. It is as if Plato discreetly (but not too discreetly) planted this little hint that not everything is true in the first part of the palinode, i.e., in the passages concerning the first three kinds of beneficial μανία.

[248] DE VRIES, *op. cit.*, ad locum. See also, DODDS, *op. cit.*, 75ff., for the possible relationship between this form of madness and the Dionysiac rites.

[249] See AST, *op. cit., ad locum*. Compare with DELATTE, *op. cit.*, 71.

the beneficial maddening influence of the gods, and the one to find which rituals to perform. Others, however, do not agree with this and believe that the diseased were also the μαινόμενοι. Under the influence of the gods, they would be able to find the cure to their own disease[250]. The correct rituals to be performed seem to be discovered through μανία. If that is the case, we are dealing with another example of knowledge being imparted through μανία. Μανία's contribution would be, as is the case with prophetic madness and, as we shall see, with poetic madness as well, of a cognitive nature. This kind of madness would allow access to knowledge that would otherwise be impossible to reach. But even this is uncertain. Another possible interpretation is that what is at stake here is not a matter of discovering a cure through μανία, but that μανία itself constitutes the treatment and cure for the problem. By undergoing a ritual that involves going into delirium, the diseased person would be expiated, expurgated and purified, in other words, released from the effects of the ancestral curse. In this case, the contribution of μανία would not be cognitive.

However difficult it may be to understand precisely the details of the phenomenon Socrates is alluding to, it is reasonable to assume that the reference to it at this stage of the dialogue fulfils the same functions as the other two kinds of beneficial μανία presented in this passage. As we have seen in the previous section, prophetic madness contains a fundamental cognitive element. The benefit that arises from this form of madness consists in breaking the barriers that limit our normal perspective. As we shall shortly see, the same can be said about poetic madness. It is therefore reasonable to assume that what is mostly at stake in telestic madness is likewise its nature as a privileged form of access to cognitive contents that would otherwise remain hidden.

5. Μανία ποιητική. Μανία ποιητική in the *corpus platonicum*

Like the first two kinds of beneficial μανία, the third kind (245a1ff.) focuses on a very important aspect of ancient Greek culture. Poetry was probably the most important means of cultural transmission in ancient Greek culture. It was through poetry that one learnt about the past. It was through poetry that religious and moral values were communicated and taught. It was through poetry that a sense of community between the

[250] See LINFORTH, Telestic Madness (…), 168; but also THOMPSON, *op. cit., ad locum.*

successive generations, a sense of belonging to the same culture was built. In a society especially marked by the spoken word, where writing was a new technology, the rhythm and musicality of poetry allowed the preservation of memory and the transmission of past events and thoughts. If it is true that Ancient Greek poetry used other subjects besides the deeds of those who came before us, it is nonetheless true that it was used as a means of education. In this sense, poetry was imbued with an authority difficult for us to understand. Poetry was listened to, discussed, remembered and recited over and over again. It was used as a means of socialization, in symposia and in festivals. It celebrated those who were dead, heroes and gods. It was, in this way, as if the cement that held the generations together, the link between past and present, projecting itself towards the future.

This, however, does not explain why it could be considered a form of μανία; or, to put it in better terms, how it could be understood as being the result of a form of μανία. The association between poetry and, by extension, creativity and madness has become almost a cliché in Western civilisation. Poets, musicians and artists in general are often seen as eccentric individuals, people that are manifestly different from ordinary human beings. This is due not only to their unusual abilities, but also to a set of odd behaviours that are often associated with them. It is often said that artists, and poets among them, see and think in a different way. Poets and other artists often describe the experience of creating their works as being, at least up to a point, beyond their control. It may result from a vision that becomes irresistible, an image so striking that compels one to express in writing or through other means of expression. It may be that the composition of a poem is experienced more as a dictation from an unknown source than as an active and controlled process. Perhaps the description of these experiences says little more about the creative process than what could be said about most of our thoughts: that we do not know where they come from. It might be the case that some poets and artists are just more attuned to this fact and more open to it, more sensitive to these unexpected and unknown modulations of our mind. Regardless of how one might interpret this, the fact remains that, to a large extent, the production of a text, even of a text that, like this one, is superlatively prosaic and uninspired, is something that one does not completely control. To a certain degree, a text is not written, it writes itself.

This being said, one cannot overlook the fact that what has become almost a cliché for us was in the context of ancient Greek culture a novel and original way of thinking about poetry. It has been noted by modern scholars, e.g., Delatte and Tigerstedt, that the

idea that poets at the moment of composition were μαινόμενοι was not as old and traditional as one would suppose from reading Plato[251]. The first instance of this idea is found in Democritus[252]; and it is the only pre-platonic appearance of such understanding of poetry. Even if it is true that invoking the Muses or other gods in poems was commonplace, nothing in such invocations seems to imply that the poet would lose control of himself or become a simple mouthpiece of the gods (as was the case of the Pythia, e.g.). Homer and Hesiod were not μαινόμενοι. The conception of so called inspiration, in their case, seems to have been different. The Muses did not speak through them, as Apollo spoke through the Pythia. The intervention of the Muses was of a

[251] See DELATTE, *op. cit.*, 5-79; TIGERSTEDT, E. N., Furor Poeticus: Poetic Inspiration in Greek Literature before Democritus and Plato, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 31 (2), 1970, 163-178; TIGERSTEDT E. N., *Plato's idea of poetical inspiration*, Helsinki, *Commentationes* Humanarum Litterarum *Societas Scientiarum Fennica* XLIV, 2, 1969; also DODDS, *op. cit.*, 89: "The notion of "frenzied" poet composing in a state of ecstasy appears not to be traceable further back than the fifth century". Cf. VERDENIUS, *op. cit.*, 135-136, for the opposite view regarding the novelty of this identification between μανία and poetic creativity. In Verdenius' opinion, Plato does not take this identification seriously and is just appropriating the ancient view on poetic creativity as a gimmick: "Was Platon hier tut, is ein Kunstgriff, denn nirgend sonst wird die Dichtung μανία gennant. Wenn diese Anwendung ein Kunstgriff ist, brauchen wir das Wort auch nicht im buchstäblichen Sinne aufzufassen. Es war gewiss nicht Platons Absicht, die Dichtung als "Wahnsinn" darzustellen. Man darf die Bedeutung aber auch wieder nicht zu stark abschwächen. Wesentlich bleibt jedenfalls der Gedanke, dass der Dichter in dem Banne einer höheren Macht steht. Dieser Gedanke hat von Anfang and die Selbstauffassung der griechischen Dichter bestimmt und ist von Platon übernommen worden.". See also: COLIN, G., Platon et la poésie, *Revue des Études Grecques* 41 (1928), 1-72; SIKES, E. E., *The Greek View of Poetry*, London, Methuen & Co., 1931, 20; FREEMAN, K., Plato. The use of inspiration, *Greece & Rome* 9 (1940), 137-149; VERDENIUS, W. J., Platon et la poésie, *Mnemosyne* 12 (1944), 118-150; WEHRLI, F., Der erhabene und der schlichte Stil in der poetisch-rhetorischen Theorie der Antike. In: *Phyllobolia für P. von der Muehll zum 60. Geburtstag*, Basel, Schwabe, 1946, 9-34; SPERDUTI, A., The divine nature of poetry in antiquity, *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 81 (1950), 209-240; DODDS, *op. cit.*, 80ff., 101 nn. 124-127; HACKFORTH, *op. cit.*, 60ff.; ROCHA-PEREIRA, M. H. da, O conceito de poesia na Grécia arcaica, *Humanitas* 13-14 (1961-1962), 336-357; HAVELOCK, *op. cit.*, 162; VICAIRE, P., Les Grecs et le mystère de l'inspiration poétique, *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé* 22 (1963), 68-85; CARTER, R. E., Plato and inspiration, *Journal of the History Philosophy* 5 (1967), 111-121; AVNI, A., Inspiration in Plato and the Hebrew prophets, *Comparative Literature* 20 (1968), 55-63; DE VRIES, *op. cit., ad locum*; ROBBINS, E. I., *The concept of inspiration in Greek poetry from Homer to Pindar*, diss. University of Toronto, 1968; HARRIOT, R., *Poetry and Criticism before Plato*, London, Methuen, 1969; CALVO MARTÍNEZ, *op. cit.* 177; MURRAY, P., Poetic inspiration in early Greece, *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 101 (1981), 87-100; DEAGON, A. W., *Poetry and poetic inspiration in Hesiod*, diss. Duke University, Durham, N.C., 1984; MONTANA, M., Les Muses et l'inspiration poétique, *Connaissance Hellénique* 34 (1988), 12-19; MAURIZIO, *op. cit*; MURRAY, P., Inspiration and mimesis in Plato, in: BARKER, A., WARNER, M. (ed.), *The language of the cave*, Edmonton, Alb., Academic Printing and Publishing, 1992, 27-46; PADEL (1995), PIEPER, *op. cit*. 62ff.; BILLAUT, A., La folie poétique: remarques sur les conceptions grecques de l'inspiration, *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé*, 2002, 18-35; WEINICK, S.-M., T*he Abyss above Philosophy and Poetic Madness in Plato, Hölderlin, and Nietzsche*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 2002, 32ff.; FRAZIER, F., La figure du poète, *Connaissance Hellénique* 95 (2003) N° 95, 48-58; SALA, *op. cit., ad locum*; GUIDORIZZI, *op. cit.*, 85ff.; MORGAN, K. A., Inspiration, recollection, and mimesis in Plato's « Phaedrus », in: NIGHTINGALE, A., SEDLEY, D. (ed.), *Ancient models of mind : studies in human and divine rationality*, Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010, 45-63; YUNIS, *op. cit., ad locum*.

[252] DK B 18 (= CLEM. Strom. VI 168); DK B 21 (= DIO 36, 1). See DELATTE, op. cit., 33-34.

different nature. The Muses gave them knowledge that they otherwise would not have access to. As goddesses, they showed the poet what had happened in the ancient times being described, provided details the poet would not have known. Homer only knows all the details included in the catalogue of ships because of the Muses. The Muses were the privileged sources of the knowledge poets needed for their poems[253]. The poets did not take dictation from them; they received their wisdom and communicated them through their craft. In this conception of poetry, the Muses provide the poet with a kind of knowledge that is "παρὰ τὰς κοινὰς αἰσθήσεις"[254]. Without the Muses, the poet is unable to know and to communicate what he knows.

However, the conception of poetry at stake here seems to be closer to the one found in Democritus. What Plato is hinting at is a form of possession, similar, in a way, to what happens, e.g., to the Pythia. The poet is possessed by the Muses. The Muses speak through him, through his poetic works. The poet is not himself, nor does he have control over what is happening. He is used by the Muses. The sovereign intervention of the Muses is the fundamental moment in the production of poetry. They might provide the knowledge needed, but they also control the whole process of composition, as if the poem was dictated or whispered in the poet's ear.

To better understand what this might mean, we should give a short and cursory glimpse at the descriptions of this phenomenon elsewhere in the *corpus platonicum*. The first among these can be found in the *Ion.* There is no explicit reference to poetic μανία as such in the *Ion*. However, it is clear that it is used as a category to explain the phenomena Socrates is trying to account for. The discussion in this dialogue is centred on the role of the rhapsode and the nature of his activity. The main interlocutor, Ion, is not a poet himself, but he makes a living reciting poetry, improvising over it and discussing it. He has the peculiar characteristic of being highly specialised in his work: he only recites Homer. Socrates is curious about the nature of his activity, of which Ion is so proud, and tries to find out exactly what it is he does and why he is so proficient in the works of Homer and so helpless in the works of other poets. Unlike Ion, Socrates does not believe that what the rhapsode does constitutes any kind of τέχνη (532c4f.)[255]. He does not even

[253] See DODDS, *op. cit.*, p. 88: "The gift, then, of the Muses, or one of their gifts, is the power of true speech".
[254] To use once again Aristotle's famous phrase in *Metaphysics* A, 981b14.
[255] "οὐ χαλεπὸν τοῦτό γε εἰκάσαι, ὦ ἑταῖρε, ἀλλὰ παντὶ δῆλον ὅτι τέχνῃ καὶ ἐπιστήμῃ περὶ Ὁμήρου λέγειν ἀδύνατος εἶ"

believe that he possesses any kind of knowledge of the subjects he recites and talks about. Socrates has a different explanation for the extraordinary abilities of Ion. Ion is so proficient about Homer because he is moved by a θεία δύναμις (533d1ff.)[256]. Socrates illustrates this δύναμις by comparing it with magnetic force. The magnetic rock attracts a metal ring and its force travels through the ring, enabling it to attract another ring, and so on. The magnetic force is transmitted from its source, the rock, to the first ring, and from the first ring to the second. The magnetic rock therefore attracts the second ring, even though it is not in direct contact with it. The first ring serves as intermediary, or, better yet, as the means through which the rock's magnetic force travels in order to attract the second. Both rings are under the power and spell of the rock's magnetic force, one directly, the other indirectly.

The Muses are analogous to the magnetic rock[257]. It is from them that the θεία δύναμις originates. They exert that force firstly on the poets and then the force is transmitted through the poets to the rhapsodes and through the rhapsodes to the audience. The force does not belong to the poet, but to the Muses. *A fortiori*, it does not belong to the rhapsode either. The poet and the rhapsode are under the spell of the same divine force, but whereas the poet is affected directly, in the case of the rhapsode, the force is channelled through the poet. The rhapsodes and the poets are therefore ἔνθεοι, possessed by gods. The poet is ἔνθεος through direct intervention of the Muses, the rhapsode, through transmission from the poet, the audience, through transmission from the rhapsode. The poets are "οὐκ ἔμφρονες", not in possession of φρονεῖν (534a). As such, they are compared with the Corybantes and those who are moved by bacchic frenzy. They are not in control of themselves; they are rather under the power of the Muses. The Muses speak

[256] "ἔστι γὰρ τοῦτο τέχνη μὲν οὐκ ὂν παρὰ σοὶ περὶ Ὁμήρου εὖ λέγειν, ὃ νυνδὴ ἔλεγον, θεία δὲ δύναμις ἥ σε κινεῖ, ὥσπερ ἐν τῇ λίθῳ ἣν Εὐριπίδης μὲν Μαγνῆτιν ὠνόμασεν, οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ Ἡρακλείαν. καὶ γὰρ αὕτη ἡ λίθος οὐ μόνον αὐτοὺς τοὺς δακτυλίους ἄγει τοὺς σιδηροῦς, ἀλλὰ καὶ δύναμιν ἐντίθησι τοῖς δακτυλίοις ὥστ᾽ αὖ δύνασθαι ταὐτὸν τοῦτο ποιεῖν ὅπερ ἡ λίθος, ἄλλους ἄγειν δακτυλίους, ὥστ᾽ ἐνίοτε ὁρμαθὸς μακρὸς πάνυ σιδηρίων καὶ δακτυλίων ἐξ ἀλλήλων ἤρτηται· πᾶσι δὲ τούτοις ἐξ ἐκείνης τῆς λίθου ἡ δύναμις ἀνήρτηται."

[257] "οὕτω δὲ καὶ ἡ Μοῦσα **ἐνθέους** μὲν ποιεῖ αὐτή, διὰ δὲ τῶν ἐνθέων τούτων ἄλλων **ἐνθουσιαζόντων** ὁρμαθὸς ἐξαρτᾶται. πάντες γὰρ οἵ τε τῶν ἐπῶν ποιηταὶ οἱ ἀγαθοὶ οὐκ ἐκ τέχνης ἀλλ᾽ **ἔνθεοι** ὄντες καὶ **κατεχόμενοι** πάντα ταῦτα τὰ καλὰ λέγουσι ποιήματα, καὶ οἱ μελοποιοὶ οἱ ἀγαθοὶ ὡσαύτως, ὥσπερ οἱ **κορυβαντιῶντες οὐκ ἔμφρονες** ὄντες ὀρχοῦνται, οὕτω καὶ οἱ μελοποιοὶ **οὐκ ἔμφρονες** ὄντες τὰ καλὰ μέλη ταῦτα ποιοῦσιν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐπειδὰν ἐμβῶσιν εἰς τὴν ἁρμονίαν καὶ εἰς τὸν ῥυθμόν, **βακχεύουσι** καὶ **κατεχόμενοι**, ὥσπερ αἱ **βάκχαι** ἀρύονται ἐκ τῶν ποταμῶν μέλι καὶ γάλα **κατεχόμεναι**, **ἔμφρονες δὲ οὖσαι οὔ**, καὶ τῶν μελοποιῶν ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦτο ἐργάζεται, ὅπερ αὐτοὶ λέγουσι." Notice the repeated and emphatic use of terms we have already identified as correlated to μανία. See also 535e5ff., where the next stages of the κατοχή are described: from Muse to poet, from poet to rhapsode, from rhapsode to audience. Notice also how Ion summarizes all of this in 536d5 with the simple formulation "κατεχόμενος καὶ μαινόμενος".

through them and all the beauty and truth that can be found in their words is wholly dependent on this divine intervention. The poet is passive in relation to his own ability. What he knows and what he composes is the direct result of the intervention of the Muses. He does what the Muses make him do. He is, in this respect, ἔνθεος; he has the god within in, he is possessed by the god. The poet becomes as if mad; he loses control over himself. But this loss of control has cognitive effects as well. It is a form of knowledge that comes with lack of control, of sovereignty over oneself.

This is an apparently paradoxical characteristic: it shows something one would otherwise ignore, but at the same time makes one lose track of everything that usually is directly presented to us. The knowledge derived from possession by the Muses comes at the expense of understanding what is right in front of one's nose. This circumstance is illustrated by the experience of the rhapsode whilst reciting Homer (535b1ff.). The rhapsode may very well be able to recite Homer perfectly, as the poet may be able to tell us who were the leaders of the Greeks and how many ships they brought to Troy, but he loses himself in his recitation, he loses track of himself, becomes another, forgets where he is and what he is. The rhapsode is transported to the scene he is reciting. He is no longer on stage reciting; he is in Ithaca or Troy. This shows us a disconnection between the situation the rhapsode is actually in, namely, reciting poetry before an audience, and the situation presented in the poem, the situation he is actually "living". This is madness, the opposite of φρονεῖν. The rhapsode does not see reality as it really is. Neither would the poet, in a way; when he is composing his poem, he is watching whatever is happening in the poem; not what really is. But this is part of what Socrates describes as a θεία μοῖρα and a κατοχή and seems to be understood throughout the dialogue as a blessing from the gods (536c1f.).

However, the description of the rhapsode's and the poet's situation as being the result of a θεία μοῖρα and of a κατοχή is, in a sense, ironic. It is an answer to the absurd claims of knowledge (and even universal knowledge) made by Ion. These being disproven by Socrates, he uses this theory about ἐνθουσιασμός to explain poetry and the peculiar abilities of the rhapsode. The rhapsode and the poet themselves do not know; they are not responsible for what good comes from their poetry: they are just instruments of the gods.

We can find something along the same lines in the *Apology* and the *Meno*.

Although these dialogues do not analyse at length the nature of poetry and the creative process of the poets, they deal, as the *Ion*, with knowledge claims. In the *Apology*, poets, together with other "experts" who claim knowledge, are subjected to Socratic examination (21b2ff., especially 22b7ff.)[258]. They are questioned and found lacking. Socrates ends up finding no ground for them being considered σοφοί. The poets, like the politicians and the τεχνῖται, are unable to justify their knowledge claims. Since the poet cannot justify his claims, the content of the poetry is said to be based on some kind of gift from the gods. As in the *Ion*, they are described as composing in a state of ἐνθουσιασμός (22c1). Whatever is true and beautiful of what they say derives their truth and beauty from the divine gift they receive.

We find parallels of this also in the *Meno*. Although the *Meno* does not focus directly on the nature of poet's knowledge claim, this is briefly alluded to when Socrates and Meno are considering the nature of the politicians' knowledge claim, sc. that they know how to rule the πόλις. Having established that they do not actually possess any kind of knowledge on that matter, Socrates tries to explain that what they actually possess is ὀρθὴ δόξα (97b1ff.). The politicians might have adopted some correct theses, but they do it not because they actually know anything. The truth of their assertions and the apparent wisdom of their decisions do not derive from knowledge, nor does their activity can be considered a kind of τέχνη.

What they get right they owe to a divine gift. Socrates goes as far as to say that it is in a state of ἐνθουσιασμός, like the prophets and soothsayers, that the politicians rule the city (99b7ff.)[259]. Success in spite of ignorance is explained by the intervention of the gods. In a cursory remark, the situation of the poets is said to be the same as the politicians and prophets (99c7ff.)[260]. The poets, in a way, do know something, but this knowledge is unaccounted for. They do not know how they know, nor are their claims of knowledge

[258] "ἔγνων οὖν αὖ καὶ περὶ τῶν ποιητῶν ἐν ὀλίγῳ τοῦτο, ὅτι οὐ σοφίᾳ ποιοῖεν ἃ ποιοῖεν, ἀλλὰ φύσει τινὶ καὶ **ἐνθουσιάζοντες** ὥσπερ οἱ θεομάντεις καὶ οἱ χρησμῳδοί: καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι λέγουσι μὲν πολλὰ καὶ καλά, ἴσασιν δὲ οὐδὲν ὧν λέγουσι. τοιοῦτόν τί μοι ἐφάνησαν πάθος καὶ οἱ ποιηταὶ πεπονθότες, καὶ ἅμα ἠσθόμην αὐτῶν διὰ τὴν ποίησιν οἰομένων καὶ τἆλλα σοφωτάτων εἶναι ἀνθρώπων ἃ οὐκ ἦσαν."

[259] "οὐκοῦν εἰ μὴ ἐπιστήμῃ, εὐδοξίᾳ δὴ τὸ λοιπὸν γίγνεται: ᾗ οἱ πολιτικοὶ ἄνδρες χρώμενοι τὰς πόλεις ὀρθοῦσιν, οὐδὲν διαφερόντως ἔχοντες πρὸς τὸ φρονεῖν ἢ οἱ χρησμῳδοί τε καὶ οἱ θεομάντεις: καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι **ἐνθουσιῶντες** λέγουσιν μὲν ἀληθῆ καὶ πολλά, ἴσασι δὲ οὐδὲν ὧν λέγουσιν."

[260] "ὀρθῶς ἄρ' ἂν καλοῖμεν **θείους** τε οὓς νυνδὴ ἐλέγομεν χρησμῳδοὺς καὶ μάντεις καὶ τοὺς ποιητικοὺς ἅπαντας: καὶ τοὺς πολιτικοὺς οὐχ ἥκιστα τούτων φαῖμεν ἂν **θείους** τε εἶναι καὶ **ἐνθουσιάζειν**, ἐπίπνους ὄντας καὶ **κατεχομένους ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ**, ὅταν κατορθῶσι λέγοντες πολλὰ καὶ μεγάλα πράγματα, μηδὲν εἰδότες ὧν λέγουσιν."

able to resist sustained Socratic probing. Whatever they have knowledge of is not the product of a sustained practice of acquisition of knowledge. They have rather been the recipients of a gift from the gods. Their opinions might even be true, but any truth found in them does not result from the poets having discovered anything, or having any kind of knowledge themselves. The type of knowledge they might have falls under the category of ὀρθὴ δόξα. They may be right, but they have no true knowledge, because they cannot present their grounds. Whatever is correct in their assertions will be the result of ὀρθὴ δόξα, understood as a θεία μοῖρα, not true knowledge, and unsteady and fragile. It is something the poets, like the politicians and the prophets, are passive about, something beyond their control.

From the context in the *Ion* and the *Meno*, one can understand that this idea of divine gift is something like a convenient excuse. The poets are found lacking in what regards their knowledge claims. When subjected to the test, they are unable to account for what they say, they display an insufficient knowledge of their own works and are overall unable to justify their assertions. But they are also generally recognised as possessing wisdom, and poetry is widely used as the main repository of cognitive patrimony of ancient Greek society. By explaining this peculiar situation as resulting from a divine intervention or a divine gift, Socrates is providing a justification for the social role the poets play. But, at the same time, this explanation explains away the knowledge claims of the poets. It shows that whatever they say is not out of knowledge, but rather the result of something else. Whatever the poet says comes from the gods, therefore, he does not know, but this does not mean that what he says should not be listened to, since it is the product of divine dispensation. It is unclear how much of this explanation is supposed to be taken seriously. It might be just a way out for the poets and the rhapsode, a convenient excuse, a way for them to save face. It is clearly so at least in the *Ion*, when, at the end of the dialogue, Ion is faced with the choice between being considered ignorant or divinely inspired. He obviously chooses the latter option. The idea that poetry is the result of a divine gift is, however, a mark of inferiority. The seemingly ideal would be for it to be the product of a τέχνη. The idea of divine gift is almost like a consolation prize given by Socrates to the poets.

But in the *Phaedrus* something different seems to be hinted at. The fact that poetry is the result of a kind of μανία is not a mark of inferiority. Μανία ποιητική is a form of μανία: it is passive, a form of loss of control; whatever it transmits, it is the product of

divine dispensation. This does not appear as something pejorative. It is positive that it comes from the gods; the fact that it does makes whatever results from it superlatively good. It is μανία; it is not φρονεῖν, but this is good. It provides something one does not normally have access to, something that could not be made available through "rational" means. Without being possessed by the Muses, without becoming μαινόμενος, the poet is unable to fulfil his role as educator of the Greeks. The benefit of poetry therefore derives directly from its character as a form of μανία.

6. Beneficial μανίαι and their superiority over τέχνη

At least two of the examples of beneficial madness presented in this part of the palinode are explicitly contrasted with forms of τέχνη. All the references to the τέχναι that contrast with μανίαι προφητική and ποιητική stress the superiority of these forms of μανία over their equivalent τέχναι. Μανία προφητική is contrasted with other forms of divination that do not rely on being possessed by the gods. These are "rational" approaches to the problems already mentioned concerning oracles. This could be understood as some sort of τέχνη προφητική, a body of knowledge and a set of skills that could be taught. Those who possessed this skill would be able to read specific signs and interpret them according to a set of rules. The interpreters know what they are doing. They are experts on their specific fields. They are in control of themselves and are able to apply a specialized form of knowledge to a specific region of reality. Socrates gives the interpretation of the flight of birds as an example of such skill[261]. The way specific kinds of birds flew, their position in relation to the observer and the direction of the flight were used for purposes similar to the ones the oracles were used for. This kind of τέχνη tries to achieve what μανία προφητική does, but through the exercise of sovereign control and the application of "rational" knowledge.

Apparently, this would seem to have a clear advantage over the wild, uncontrolled, non-sovereign aspects of the kind of prophecy that is achieved by being overtaken by a

[261] 244c5-d1: "ἐπεὶ καὶ τήν γε τῶν ἐμφρόνων, ζήτησιν τοῦ μέλλοντος διά τε ὀρνίθων ποιουμένων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων σημείων, ἅτ᾽ ἐκ διανοίας ποριζομένων ἀνθρωπίνῃ οἰήσει νοῦν τε καὶ ἱστορίαν, οἰονοϊστικὴν ἐπωνόμασαν, ἣν νῦν οἰωνιστικὴν τῷ ω σεμνύνοντες οἱ νέοι καλοῦσιν· ὅσῳ δὴ οὖν τελεώτερον καὶ ἐντιμότερον μαντικὴ οἰωνιστικῆς, τό τε ὄνομα τοῦ ὀνόματος ἔργον τ᾽ ἔργου, τόσῳ κάλλιον μαρτυροῦσιν οἱ παλαιοὶ μανίαν σωφροσύνης τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ τῆς παρ᾽ ἀνθρώπων γιγνομένης."

god. One would be able to learn such skill and also teach it to others. One would need not search for one of the rare people that have been blessed with some kind of divine gift, but rather for someone who has studied the matter thoroughly. One would not need to be submitted to the unpredictable whims of the god that is being consulted or have to interpret the mad ravings of his mouthpiece. One would simply need to consult an expert that, calmly and clearly, would answer one's question and provide useful advice. The unpredictability and obscurity of divination through μανία seems to be in many ways inferior to the accessibility and clarity of divination through some sort of τέχνη.

However, the control that is at the core of these τέχναι seems to be nothing but an illusion. There is a reason one needs oracles to help one guide one's life. One needs knowledge to guide it, but one does not have such knowledge easily at hand. There is always something missing. We have already seen that the consequences of one's actions are always unclear and uncertain, for the future is dark and full of anxiety. The use of oracles may seem irrational and superstitious, but is actually lucid in a very fundamental way. The use of oracles is an acknowledgement that there are dimensions of human life that are beyond our grasp, that what we are able to know has a limit beyond which one cannot go. That this limit apparently is not situated beyond the sphere of what is required for human action and that the knowledge that is lacking is of fundamental importance for at least some endeavours is probably unfortunate. The lack of that knowledge is not a matter of indifference. One needs it and one has to get it somehow. The use of τέχνη to achieve this end stands on the assumption that there is a link between a specific phenomenon, such as the flight of birds, and the result of a specific decision or action. The idea that the flight of a bird is a sign of things to come assumes there is a connection between the former and the latter. It is this assumption that is far from clear. The use of oracles also stands on the assumption that the oracle is a way of communicating with the gods - an assumption that is far from justified. But the certainty and the confidence regarding the knowledge that is lacking is transferred to the gods. They are the ones that are in position to know, if anyone is. The idea that one can interpret signs and achieve the same result as the oracle might even be true, but the perspective from which the use of these τέχναι arises is one that understands life as something ultimately understandable and controllable through human means. Τέχνη προφητική would be one of the variety of τέχναι that help humans navigate successfully through life, a τέχνη that opens a door to what could result from one's actions, or if one's actions can count with the favour of the

gods. Μανία προφητική, in contrast, is the result of the radical awareness of the limits, fragility and obscurity of human life, an acknowledgement of the need to be helped by forces that are far more powerful than ours and of perspectives that are far more lucid and knowledgeable.

Μανία ποιητική also seems to have its own "rational" foil: a τέχνη ποιητική[262]. It is unclear what is meant by this in the text. It is true that the production of poetry, in the widest sense of the word, relies on the employment of a set of skills. One needs to be adept in the usage of language for expressive purposes. This requires some sort of expertise on the vocabulary that is specific to the work's genre and subject-matter. But it also requires the skill to use those words in such a way as to convey clear ideas, powerful emotions and vivid images. This is the sort of skill that one finds in the great poets and in great works of literature. Well-chosen and well-placed words make dialogues, situations and whole worlds come to life. Masterful sentences make the listener or reader understand complex situations with clarity and immediacy. Poetry in general, with its use of rhymes, rhythms, alliteration and metre requires a mastery of a multiplicity of linguistic and expressive resources. Ancient Greek poetry in particular relied heavily on a complex system of metrification that demanded an exceptional feel for rhythm. Τέχνη ποιητική might refer to this skill. It that is the case, the fact that it is understood as a τέχνη assumes a specific thesis regard the nature and origin of this skill. One might understand this skill as an innate ability, a talent, or an ability that is acquired through practice and effort. In either of these cases, the designation of τέχνη is appropriate. Even if the skill is acquired through practice, this does not mean that it arises from an effective understanding of the reality at stake or that it can be imparted, transmitted and taught as a body of knowledge. Even if one can identify "technical" components in the art of writing or composing poems, these components do not seem to be articulated in such a way as to constitute a body of knowledge similar to the ones found in the disciplines known as τέχναι.

However, a reading of this passage might suggest another understanding of the notion of τέχνη, especially if we consider the suggested purpose of poetry: the education of the succeeding generations about the glorious deeds of the past. We have already mentioned the importance of poetry as a bridge between different generations of Ancient

[262] 245a4ff.: "ὃς δ' ἂν ἄνευ μανίας Μουσῶν ἐπὶ ποιητικὰς θύρας ἀφίκηται, πεισθεὶς ὡς ἄρα ἐκ τέχνης ἱκανὸς ποιητὴς ἐσόμενος, ἀτελὴς αὐτός τε καὶ ἡ ποίησις ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν μαινομένων ἡ τοῦ σωφρονοῦντος ἠφανίσθη."

Greek culture, as the link between the past and the present. Poetry was the main source regarding events of the past and the ideals and traditions that framed and shaped their culture. As such, poetry was of fundamental cultural importance, with poets playing the role of preservers of culture. Focusing on this cultural aspect of poetry, one could understand τέχνη ποιητική as a form of communicating the facts and ideals that are at the heart of poetry. First and foremost, it would require that the poets have knowledge of the events of the past, and also of their social and cultural meaning. The transmission of these elements would then be done through the vehicle of poetry, with rhythm and metre added to make them easier to memorise, but also more interesting and seductive. At first sight, it would be possible to do such a thing through a set of rational principles that could be taught. The facts that would be told poetically would constitute the body of knowledge, together with the techniques to tell them poetically. But the result of this τέχνη ποιητική, even if such τέχνη was possible, would, according to Socrates, fail to produce the same effects as the poetry that is produced as a result of a possession by the Muses.

We have already seen what the contribution of the Muses might be. The two kinds of contribution are different, but both are possible. The first has to do with a conception of the poetic activity that has had a very long and fruitful tradition. The idea that the poet is overtaken by a superior force is very old and has been repeated and elaborated on so much that it sounds almost like a dead metaphor. The poet is not himself at the moment of composition. He has no control over the process. He writes or recites what some other force, a divine force, inspires him. In this sense, he is but a vessel or a mouthpiece that provides the connection between the divine entity and the mortals that listen to the poetry. The other conception, perhaps even older than this one, but that does not seem to have survived as well in western literary tradition, does not present the poet as having lost control. As we have seen above, the poet is not possessed. He knows what he is doing and he is capable of doing it exceedingly well. The Muses, the daughters of Mnemosyne, contribute in a fundamental way. But they do not take over the poet. Their contribution is mainly of a cognitive nature. The Muses impart to the poet the knowledge that he would otherwise be unable to get. As a simple mortal, Homer does not have access to the catalogue of all the Greek ships that sailed to Troy. He needs the Muses to tell him how many ships were under the command of Agamemnon son of Atreus or Nestor son of Neleus. The need for a μανία ποιητική arises from an understanding of poetry as a task that surpasses the poet's all too human ability, a task that requires divine help. In this case,

any attempt to accomplish the tasks of poetry without divine aid will fail, because they are beyond mere mortal forces. The result of this attempt would pale in comparison to the products of the collaboration of mortal and god. The effect over the audience is one of the essential aspects of poetry, and it is quite possible that this effect would not be achieved through the "rational" transmission of the feats of our ancestors.[263]

Regardless of what these τέχναι might exactly be, what seems to be important is that they are surpassed by the corresponding μανίαι. These μανίαι provide something otherwise unavailable, something that is beyond mere mortal grasp. The contrast between τέχνη and μανία in this stage of the palinode suggest the existence of some sort of scale. Τέχνη, at a specifically human level, allows humans to overcome the limitations of the normal, unaided human perspective. It provides a perspective that is παρὰ τὰς κοινὰς αἰσθήσεις. But, at least in certain situations, τέχνη seems to fail to provide the knowledge required. In these situations, one would require a different kind of knowledge: a kind of knowledge that we could call παρὰ τὰς τεχνάς, to paraphrase Aristotle's phrase, mentioned above. This kind of knowledge would have to go beyond τέχνη, beyond what is humanly possible. It would require the help and blessing of some divine entity. In short, it would have to be some sort of θεία δόσις. In this context, this knowledge would correspond to a form of beneficial μανία. The goods produced by beneficial μανίαι are more than just good: they are superlatively good. They excel at their own tasks. This seems to draw on the idea of the distance between men and gods. No matter how far men go, how much they know, how powerful they are, they are always surpassed by the gods. The gods are not only better, they have the power to cancel out every product of human ingenuity. In the same way, the gods have the power to bestow blessings on mankind and to help each human being to achieve something good.

In conclusion, τέχναι, regardless of their power, seem to be all too human. The τέχναι mentioned at this stage of the palinode are incapable of performing the same tasks as their corresponding μανίαι. Each τέχνη has a scope limited to the scope of its corresponding μανία. There is an overlap between them in what regards their purpose and aims. But, in the end, these τέχναι fail to provide what they are aiming at. This fact

[263] One could also speculate (though there is no reference to it in the text) that some sort of "τέχνη τελεστική" would be at least thinkable. If the interpretation that what is healed by this sort of μανία consists of mental diseases, the rational approach to this kind of illness by medicine might be seen as this μανία's "rational" counterpart.

suggests the existence of realms of reality τέχνη is unable to dominate. There are aspects of life that cannot be controlled or dealt with through the sovereign application of human knowledge, no matter how sophisticated it might be.

7. Κατοχή and θεία δόσις

Μανία is understood as a phenomenon in relation to which we are passive. One is taken by a force that does what it wants with one. It is a situation of complete loss of self-control and sovereignty. This contrasts to what is understood as the normal situation. Normally, people are seen as the cause of most of their actions. Whenever someone acts, the principle of their action seems to reside in themselves. This spontaneity is at the heart of our understanding of human action. Human actions do not occur in a vacuum. They depend on the interaction with what surrounds us. This interaction can be one of manipulation, use, application, but also one of motivation. The multiplicity of possibilities one encounters apply pressure, they call one towards them. They are, in a word, a source of motivation. They cause attraction or aversion. But, in order to be able to cause attraction or aversion, there is something that must be the subject of such attraction or aversion. Also, the fact that something attracts does not necessarily imply an action towards it, a pursuit of it; nor aversion necessarily implies a flight from it. There seems to be something that is simultaneously open and influenced by external motivation, but is also able to regulate and decide what course of action to adopt towards said possibilities. Apparently, human beings are then capable of self-determination, in so far as they are not passively dragged by every instance of attraction or aversion. One could even go as far as to describe it as a form of sovereignty, since, no matter the motivation, the final choice of how to deal with it resides is still with us. In this sense, we are the cause of our own actions. In ancient Greek culture, the opposite situation, could only be understood as a form of slavery or servitude, δουλεία, a status incompatible with the dignity of a citizen or πόλις. Sovereignty was seen as a fundamental characteristic of individual and communal dignity.

Μανία radically changes this state of affairs. In whatever way, one is no longer in control of what one does. In others, this can be recognized by the eccentricity of their behaviour ("no one in their right mind would behave like that"), but also by the generally temporary nature of this situation. In fact, loss of control is usually temporary. It comes

and goes, and such transient nature allows us to have the experience of two different conditions: being in control and losing control. There is a force that comes from outside and takes control. This model of understanding can be found in Lysias speech, as it is also a possible model of understanding the way disease works. The case of Socrates' first speech is more complicated, since he goes out of his way to present an anthropological model that includes the possibility of loss of sanity as a the result of an internal conflict between different aspects of one's nature. It is still a form of loss of control, since the aspect that should preside is prevented from fulfilling that task by the aspect that should obey. One could even argue that, if we consider the first aspect, δόξα, the "self" *stricto sensu*, ἐπιθυμία could be seen as an external force. However, that may be stretching it hard to fit our own ideas. If we understand possession in this loose sense, i.e., as the situation of not being in control of one's actions any more, then this aspect of μανία becomes central to the previous two speeches. However, possession seems to imply the intervention of a third party: an invading force that takes charge. If this is the case, then Lysias could be read as maintaining this model of possession from the traditional view on love and madness, but Socrates' first speech introduces another kind of understanding. The first part of the palinode seems to revert back to the exogenous model also in this respect.

Κατοχή comes explicitly into play in the exposition regarding the first three forms of beneficial μανία. In all of these, there is the intervention of an external force; this external force is divine in nature. A powerful entity takes control of someone and makes him or her do something out of the ordinary. It is not that much different from the traditional model regarding ἔρως, when Eros or Aphrodite are understood to take control of the one who is in love. It comes from without and controls everything. This can be achieved in at least two different ways: either by forcing someone to do something, with the victim being aware of what is happening (this seems to be the variety adopted by Lysias; cf. 231d2), or by obscuring the victim’s lucidity to the point of the victim becoming completely unaware of what is happening. By changing someone's perception of the situation, the invading force can provoke the odd behaviours it is aiming for (good examples of this are the madness scenes in Euripides' *Hercules Furens* and Sophocles' *Ajax*). Whichever way this is accomplished, this puts the attacked person at the mercy of its attacker. Since the attacker is a god, and therefore, much more powerful than the victim, there is no possible resistance.

This view of κατοχή, however, is much different from the one we find in the beginning of the palinode. It implies a destructive interference and an invasion of negative results. This, as we have seen, is not what happens with beneficial μανία. Two fundamental ingredients are introduced at this stage of the dialogue that change the nature of possession: one of them is the idea that the gods can do only good, the other is the notion of θεία δόσις. These are obviously interrelated, but are introduced at different stages and relate to possession in different ways. As we have already seen, the idea that the gods can do only good is introduced even before the palinode itself, in the transition between Socrates' first speech and the palinode. In 242b5, Socrates, after having pronounced his speech, is about to leave. But he is detained by "τὸ δαιμόνιόν τε καὶ τὸ εἰωθὸς σημεῖόν", who tells him he has committed a sin by stating that Ἔρως, being a god, can do something evil. The fact that the idea that a god can do no harm goes against ancient Greek religious tradition is not even mentioned. This is accepted as a fact and becomes the basis on which the palinode will be built. Without this assumption, attributing divine origin to μανία would not be an argument for an apology of ἔρως. Without this assumption, ἔρως and μανία would most likely be seen as they often were: as harmful forces set upon vulnerable mortals by cruel and vengeful gods. However, if the gods can do no harm, then everything that comes from the gods can only be good. Divine origin becomes synonymous with good; everything that a god causes is, in reality, a blessing.

This rule applies, perhaps oddly, to μανία. A phenomenon that had been seen so far under an entirely negative light now acquires a more complex configuration. By positing that some kinds of μανία are divine in origin, Socrates is affirming that at least those kinds of μανία are beneficial. These kinds of μανία are not a curse, but rather a gift from the gods, a θεία δόσις. This opens up the possibility of a kind of μανία that brings forth good things. If a given instance of μανία is a result of a divine intervention on human life in the form of possession, and if the gods can do no harm, then a μανία that results from a divine intervention cannot be anything but good[264]. This seems to work rather well to explain phenomena such as those related with beneficial μανίαι: forms of socially accepted possession, which produce something considered useful. As we could glimpse when we described them one by one, these μανίαι have everything to do with surpassing

[264] The other side of this is that any instance of μανία that is actually harmful must have any other cause, probably a medical cause, though the palinode is silent in this regard.

the normal cognitive limitations of mankind. These μανίαι are gifts that are given to the ones that are possessed by the gods. These are gifts in the sense of an extraordinary ability awarded by the gods. Someone that would otherwise be completely normal becomes extraordinary as a result of a beneficial divine intervention in the form of possession. But they are gifts also to the rest of mankind, since these can enjoy the fruits of this possession. Prophetic, telestic and poetic μανίαι allow mankind, through the ones that are possessed by the gods, to see beyond the reach of their own sight, to grasp beyond their own grasp.

The idea of θεία δόσις is the positive side of the simple negative assertion that the gods can do no harm, only good. From this assertion, you cannot necessarily deduce the form that this good done by the gods will take, much less that it will take the form of possession. But, once one is confronted with phenomena such as prophecy, purification rituals and poetry, and these are understood as forms of μανία that, according to the traditional view, results from divine possession, then one can actually locate these phenomena in the set of beneficial forms of divine intervention in the lives of men.

8. Two speeches in one: continuity and discontinuity between the first three forms of beneficial μανία and the second part of the palinode

Most interpretations of the palinode tend to regard it as a unity. It starts with a refutation of the basic tenet of the previous speeches; then, it dives into the analysis of the forms of beneficial μανία, mostly erotic μανία. The transition from the first three forms of beneficial μανία to the fourth is seamless and logical. Nothing major is changed from one to the other: the only difference is that Socrates goes into much more detail when considering erotic μανία, because that is, after all, the main subject of the speech. It is quite easy to see why, at first reading, the palinode seems to present no major discontinuity. Led on by the structure of the previous speeches, one expects a whole set piece of rhetoric, either perfectly structured, like Socrates' first speech, or with a cohesive thematic centre, like Lysias' speech. This expectation is increased by the beginning of the palinode. There, Socrates reduces the previous two speeches to a central idea regarding the evil of μανία, stating that the central tenet of the palinode will be the idea that μανία is not bad in all cases. He then proceeds to show cases in which μανία is not only not bad, but actually quite or even superlatively good. From there, he seamlessly transitions for the fourth kind of μανία, as if it was just another instance of the kind to which the previous

three belong, without any difference but in detail.

This reading of the palinode, however, does not do justice to the complexity of this text and is an obstacle to our understanding of the phenomena it tries to explain and describe. Our own reading of the palinode is somewhat different. We claim that there is a fundamental break within the palinode, between the exposition of the three first kinds of beneficial μανία and the fourth, erotic μανία[265]. When the palinode's attention is drawn directly towards the fourth kind of μανία in 245c1, something altogether different starts to take shape, something that will entail a complete revision of the fundamental notions behind the understanding of the previous speeches as well as behind Socrates' account of the first three kinds of beneficial μανία. The two sections of the palinode might use similar terminology, and that may suggest that we are dealing with the same type of phenomenon and theses, but that is not the case. When all is said and done, the palinode provides us with a set of radically new "ontological", "anthropological" and "theological" conceptions are introduced.

These new conceptions correspond to such a profound change in perspective as to become almost incompatible with the perspective that sustained the analysis of the first three kinds of μανία. But this discontinuity is only made clear in the analysis of erotic μανία. Before that, any reading of the beginning of the palinode would not be able to anticipate the radical changes the presentation of the fourth kind of beneficial μανία will bring, making it all the more natural to expect a smooth transition between erotic μανία and its predecessors. An apparent point of continuity, for example, seems to be the idea that all four types of beneficial μανία are the result of a θεία δόσις. They are given to mankind by the gods, for their own benefit. But even this has to be taken with a pinch of salt, seeing that our understanding of the gods is fundamentally changed through the course of the palinode as well.

The first three forms of beneficial μανία share a basic conception of μανία. Μανία is a disturbance of our awareness that makes us see things differently from what is normally seen by everyone. It is an exceptional event, an extraordinary occurrence. In normal circumstances, our perspective provides us with enough access to reality. But,

[265] We could go as far as to argue that this is the most significant moment of inflexion in what regards the perspectives on ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν drawn in the *Phaedrus*. Up until this point, the erotic speeches were in conflict regarding specific and regional matters, whilst sharing a common ground of fundamental conceptions and theses.

through the agency of some external force, this state of affairs is radically changed. In the case of "bad" μανία, something is detracted from us. We no longer access reality effectively; we no longer see things as they really are. In the case of "good" μανία, we are given something in addition. In any case, everyday awareness is taken as the standard by which the rest should be judged. More than that, it is implied that this awareness is, in its basic features, effective, clear, and sufficient for the purposes it poses itself. There is an identification between φρονεῖν and this form of awareness. What we normally see is reality as it really is.

This conviction does not mean that the acquisition of new knowledge is impossible, nor does it mean that it is impossible to be mistaken. It rather means that any mistake found in my awareness is not relevant enough to detract from the general soundness of it. The mistakes are just little glitches in an otherwise smooth-running system. In the same way, any new knowledge acquired will just be a matter of filling in the details of a big picture that is, generally speaking, correct. It is just a matter of filling in some very minor blanks. Likewise, μανία comes as a disturbance of this. It disturbs the access to reality; it separates its victim from it. It does not, however, affect the status of the sane perspective as sane. Sanity is still what is commonly held as sanity; φρονεῖν is still what is commonly held as φρονεῖν. And φρονεῖν is still identified with the normal, sane access to reality. Μανία is a serious, but regional and restricted, disturbance of this state of affairs[266].

The conception of μανία as the result of the intervention of an exogenous force can only reinforce this. Human beings are not considered to be μαινόμενοι by default. Φρονεῖν is the default setting; μανία is the exception. This applies equally to bad and good forms of μανία. The difference is in the end result, in the nature of the effects of said μανίαι, but also in the intervention of the gods or lack thereof. From the thesis that gods can do no harm we have to conclude that they are not responsible for bad forms of μανία. This, however, makes us wonder where the responsibility, according to the beginning of the palinode, must lie. It is even possible that good and bad μανίαι, in the terms of the first part of the palinode, result from two completely different types of causes and are

[266] Μανία was usually conceived as a temporary or intermittent situation. But even if we consider the idea of a permanent μανικός state, we will still have to consider it as an exceptional situation, not the rule. Also, the μαινόμενος does not usually recognize himself as μαινόμενος. Μανία is something that affects other people, a tiny minority within a community that is characterized by being φρόνιμος.

produced through two completely different processes. This would result in a rather problematic understanding of μανία, difficult to unify. Rather than a single phenomenon with a variety of different manifestations, we would be dealing with an equivocal notion, encompassing phenomena that could go from the exogenous θείαι μανίαι to the endogenous "mental health problems".

By the same token, there is no great difference between the conception of reality present in the first part of the palinode and the one underlying the previous speeches. Reality is still what everyone knows it is, it is still what is generally accepted as being reality. Μανία puts one in a position that could be described as an *aversio a realitate* – except, again, in the cases of beneficial μανία. In these cases, the relationship with reality is subtler. It is a form of access to reality. Μανία is a form of access characterized by a peculiar intensity and focus. Its intensity derives from the possession by the gods; its focus is directed towards a specific form of knowledge. This knowledge, provided by the gods, can be applied in a beneficial way. It is a potentially applied knowledge, with the intent of intervening in reality. It cannot be completely disconnected from it. It is not an *aversio a realitate*, but an intensified relationship with it. But reality is still "what everyone knows it is." What the first three kinds of beneficial μανία give access to is something one would not otherwise come about. However, it is also something that resides in the same level of reality as what everyone knows. Something is revealed that was not known beforehand, but this is a kind of knowledge that fits perfectly well with the overall perspective on reality already held. From the first three kinds of beneficial μανία, one cannot and should not expect any kind of knowledge that might radically alter one's "ontological" perspective.

The gods play a fundamental role in all this process. They are the source and cause of beneficial μανία, as we have seen. Μανία is a form of divine intervention in human life, but, in contrast to the traditional religious view, it is a positive one. The fundamental change from the traditional view regards the relationship between gods and humans. Traditionally, gods' role in human life could vary from the benign and helpful (like Athena to Odysseus) to the absolutely destructive (like Athena to Ajax, or Aphrodite to Hippolytus, etc.). There was nothing in the nature of the gods that would prevent them from being a destructive force in human life. More than that, their usually behaviour seems to tend more towards the frighteningly unpredictable then the protective. As we have seen, Socrates states something absolutely different. The gods can do only good, so

every divine intervention can only produce some benefit to mankind. But even this significant change from the traditional religious conception of the ancient Greeks will be radically overtaken by the even more significant changes in the conception of the divine at the heart of the presentation of the fourth kind of beneficial μανία.

The first three forms of μανία are limited in their effects on human life, however. These μανίαι have a limited scope of action. They are available only to some elect people – elected by the gods, which makes these kinds of μανία all the more unpredictable. These μανίαι concern only specific sections of reality, and are applied only in very specific circumstances. They constitute supplementary sources of knowledge that just add to what is commonly known, without altering the common perspective. In a culture such as this, this kind of contribution from "the gods" was already expected. The limit of normal perspectives was already part of the normal perspective, and so were the ways to surpass those limits, to a certain extent: through divine dispensations.

Socrates started the palinode by accepting the charge that ἔρως is a form of μανία. But he decisively blunted the blow by stating that at least a certain kind of ἔρως is a type of beneficial μανία. It seems to have been in order to make this point more acceptable and persuasive that Socrates made the effort to show that there are other kinds of beneficial μανία recognised as such in Ancient Greek cultural tradition. From the palinode's introduction one would expect the case of erotic μανία to be addressed in a manner similar to the other three, which are, after all, no more than prolegomena to the fourth. However, hidden behind the nominal continuity within the speech, there is actually a very significant difference between the treatment of the group that includes the three first kinds of beneficial μανία and the fourth, erotic μανία.

The differences in content, but also in form are very significant. In fact, these differences should be understood as nothing less than an "ontological", "anthropological" and "theological" revolution. A careful reading of the rest of the palinode, sc. the segment dedicated to the fourth kind of beneficial μανία, shows a substantial departure from the understanding of reality that sustains not only the first two speeches of the *Phaedrus*, but also the first part of the palinode, sc. the presentation of the first three kinds of beneficial μανία. This goes so far as to completely change the status of what was before considered to be reality. After the changes in perspective introduced by the second part of the palinode, what before was seen as reality will now be recognized as an *aversio a realitate.*

These fundamental “ontological” changes are followed but other very relevant changes in perspective. The role and nature of the gods will suffer significant modifications, inaugurating what could be described as a new “theology”. But also our understanding of our own condition and constitution as human beings will suffer radical and substantial changes, along with the previous conceptions of ἔρως and μανία. Trying to give an account of ἔρως as a form of beneficial μανία seems to be so foreign to the cultural framework from which Socrates is working that, apparently, the only way to do it is to change one's perspective on reality in a radical way.

Chapter V
Interlude: Hypothesis, Κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα and the Structure of the *Phaedrus*

What relish is in this? How runs the stream?
Or I am mad, or else this is a dream.
Let fancy still my sense in Lethe steep.
If it be thus to dream, still let me sleep!

Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, Act IV, Scene 1

In the previous two chapters we have closely followed the dramatic and rhetorical structure laid out by Plato. This was a deliberate choice on our part, made easier by the apparently clearly delineated structure of the dialogue, which can be divided into discrete parts or sections – each speech being preceded and followed by sections of dialogue that contextualise the speeches and introduce some important elements for their interpretation. We have analysed the first two speeches and tried to isolate and understand the statements regarding ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν present therein. We have dealt with these two speeches as a unit, since they share a basic set of assumptions, as well as a number of theses and conceptions regarding the phenomena we are trying to understand. We then proceeded to analyse the beginning of the palinode, viz. the discussion of the three first kinds of beneficial μανία, together with the interlude that precedes it. Considering how we have progressed through the dialogue so far, one would now expect us to carry on following the structure of the dialogue and to start discussing the longest and most complex section of the *Phaedrus*.

But this is not what we are going to do in this chapter. In this chapter, we are going to interrupt our progression through the speeches – mid-speech. The purpose of this chapter is both to look back at the structure of the *Phaedrus* up to this point, and also to look forward into the rest of the palinode. We will try to understand the inner dynamics that rules the succession of speeches, and, especially, the variations in theses and notions exhibited between the speeches, thereby acquiring a perspective that will allow us to understand the revolutionary and radical changes the discussion of erotic μανία in the palinode entails. The likely impression that this chapter sits awkwardly at this point in our analysis is not to be rejected – it should rather be welcome. By positioning this chapter

here, we are highlighting the tension between the reasonable expectation that the palinode should be considered as an integral whole, exhibiting consistent traits throughout, and our reading of it as being divided in two radically different parts. It is because we consider that the second part of the palinode, sc. the discussion of erotic μανία, corresponds to a revolutionary change in perspective, not only from the previous two speeches, but also even from the discussion of the first three kinds of beneficial μανία, that we have chosen to pause our analysis of the speech at this point.

In this chapter, we will use the notions of ὑπόθεσις and κινεῖν in *Republic* VI and VII as a tool to understand the structure and the ideas present in the *Phaedrus.* We will also explore the meaning and implications of phrases like κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα and ἀναιρεῖν τὰς ὑποθέσεις. Our reading of *Republic* VI and VII will not focus mainly on interpretation problems, but we will ask the following question: what kind of phenomenon is Plato trying to describe when he talks about ὑπόθεσις? The answer to this question is not simple and will entail an exploration of the uses and meanings of this notion. The point I will be trying to make is that the first part of the *Phaedrus* (i.e., the part that corresponds to the sequence of erotic speeches) consists of a series of revisions of ὑποθέσεις. In order to prove this point, I will have to show that the term ὑπόθεσις cannot be understood simply within the relatively narrow field of dialectics as it is described in dialogues like *Republic* and *Phaedo*, but that it refers to a phenomenon that is prevalent in other forms of knowledge, even – and especially – in the limited forms of knowledge that correspond to our spontaneous, i.e., non-technical, non-philosophical, perspective.

This will, however, be more than a terminological discussion. What is at stake in the notion of ὑπόθεσις is more than just the use of a specific term in the *corpus platonicum*. Rather, ὑπόθεσις is a fundamental operator that is present even when not explicitly mentioned – especially relevant to understanding the change from a non-philosophical to a philosophical perspective. For the purpose of showing that our spontaneous perspective is itself composed of and makes extensive use of ὑποθέσεις, it will be shown how this phenomenon is interrelated with phenomena such as οἴεσθαι εἰδέναι and the multiple possibilities of κινεῖν of our perspective. The results of our initial analysis will be a formal notion of ὑπόθεσις, which can be applied to other forms of discourse besides dialectics, and the understanding that κινεῖν is a fundamental possibility of our perspective.

1. Hypothesis and ὑπόθεσις: beware of false friends

To the ordinary reader, the Greek term ὑπόθεσις might seem relatively straightforward – so straightforward, in fact, that the correct translation into English might appear to be a simple transliteration of the word into the Roman alphabet: hypothesis[267]. It seems quite clear and straightforward that ὑπόθεσις is hypothesis, i.e., a thesis that serves as the basis of an investigation. Such an understanding of this notion might seem so obvious as to turn an explanation of its meaning into an exercise in redundancy. However, this view of the matter falls into the trap commonly laid by "false friends". The similarity between the words, added to the fact that the English word is derived from the Greek word, creates the false impression that there is a complete overlap in meaning, i.e., that the meaning and use of the one perfectly correspond to the meaning and use of the other. This, as we will show, is a misunderstanding that ignores the complexity and peculiarity of the Greek word ὑπόθεσις.

Such misunderstanding can have serious consequences for our comprehension not only of the meaning of the Greek term, but also, perhaps in a more significant way, of the Platonic use of this notion and of the phenomena it refers to. Also, we should not overlook the fact that Plato's philosophical language has a non-terminological or pre-terminological nature. The language of the *corpus platonicum* exhibits a great degree of flexibility, which is at least in part an expression of the flexibility of the non-philosophical ancient Greek language, seeping through into a still incipient philosophical tradition. It is, in a way, a terminology that is still being formed and established, and that also makes extensive use of non-philosophical language. It is also possible that Plato makes use of this terminological flexibility as yet another mechanism in the anti-treatise nature of his dialogues. At this point in this chapter, however, our aim is to briefly describe the meaning and scope of the notion of hypothesis, in order to acquire a firm footing from which we can embark in the task of searching for the peculiarities of the Greek notion of ὑπόθεσις, especially its Platonic usage, which may provide us with a valuable tool to understand the structure and meaning of the erotic speeches of the *Phaedrus*.

In terms of meaning, the English word "hypothesis" is closely related to words

[267] In this study the Greek term ὑπόθεσις will be written using the Greek alphabet. The word "hypothesis", in the Roman alphabet, will refer exclusively to the English term.

like “presupposition” and “assumption”. They are commonly used interchangeably to signify a possibility put forward as a provisional explanation for a given state of affairs. In this sense, to present a hypothesis is to assume X in order to explain Y. This meaning of the word applies especially to a context characterised by the presence of a problem of a cognitive nature. In this situation, one can postulate a hypothesis: an initial unproven thesis that serves as a starting point of an investigation. As the investigation goes on, one will be able to confirm or deny that hypothesis. In either case, there will be a cognitive gain of sorts. In some cases, the hypothesis itself is not the object of investigation, but rather a fundamental thesis used as an assumption in an investigation regarding some other thesis. This hypothesis is not the direct object of inquiry, but it is still employed as a starting point. Both kinds of hypothesis can be understood as theses consciously and purposefully put forward as tentative assumptions, working as starting points of an inquiry.

This meaning of the word contains several important aspects. Firstly, a hypothesis is an explicit thesis. It is not a hidden or unconscious assumption. As such, it is put forward as part of a conscious attempt to explain a specific state of affairs or to solve a specific problem.

Secondly, a hypothesis is provisional and tentative. It is not, strictly speaking, a categorical assertion of a thesis, but rather a putting forward of that thesis which already takes into account its hypothetical nature. It is asserted *as if* it were categorical in nature for sake of the argument. This “*as if*” is fundamental. The hypothesis is taken as a categorical assertion. Otherwise, it would not work as a hypothesis. However, the simple act of putting a thesis forward as a hypothesis implies a substantial degree of awareness of its hypothetical nature. It is functionally categorical, but without losing track of its modal fragility. This aspect of this notion of hypothesis can be seen from another angle. What makes a thesis hypothetical is not its content, but how one relates to it. A categorical and a hypothetical thesis can have the exact same content, but one of them will be taken as true with no restrictions, whereas the other will be taken as true only for the sake of the investigation at hand, with the possibility of it being confirmed or denied by subsequent findings. In one case, it is an assertion about a specific state of affairs; in the other case, it is a tool of inquiry.

Thirdly, a hypothesis serves a specific function: it is the foundation for subsequent

knowledge and the starting point of an inquiry. At the most basic level, this means that a hypothesis cannot be considered as an isolated thesis. Its purpose lies in the way it relates with other theses. To assert X does not have consequences only on X, but also on a number of other different theses, in a sometimes complex network of implication. Theses can and often are related to each other in different ways: they may corroborate or sustain one another, but may also contradict each other, wholly or partially. In the case of a hypothesis, this is all the more important, since hypotheses fulfil the role of foundations, and purposefully so. The act of presenting a hypothesis is already a way of looking forward towards all the different potential theses that will be sustained by it. This means that the truth claim of whatever is found based on the hypothesis will depend on the truth of that same hypothesis. Since the truth of the hypotheses used is only provisional and conditional, one has to be always revising them in light of whatever results from the investigation. Failure to do so can have serious consequences. The assumption of a false hypothesis as true can destroy all subsequent advances and imperil the stability of the whole building. And even after what seems to be the end of the discussion, the possibility that the hypothesis might still be object of revision remains open.

These aspects of the "modern" notion of hypothesis correlate, in one way or another, with the Platonic notion of ὑπόθεσις. In his study on Platonic dialectics, Robinson dedicates several chapters analysing the meaning and usage of the notion of ὑπόθεσις and the verb ὑποτίθεμαι in the *corpus platonicum*. Considerable attention is paid to specific dialogues, the *Meno*, the *Phaedo*, *Republic* and the *Parmenides*, but the author begins his approach by making a linguistic analysis of the verb τίθεμαι, and its correlates. According to Robinson, the meaning of τίθεμαι is to posit something, more specifically, something that is believed, "with all degrees of confidence down to the very least". He further adds that "the word does not cover beliefs which we hold without knowing how we came to hold them, or cover naïve unquestioning acceptance, nor the mere taking for granted that A is B"[268]. The meaning of the verb ὑποτίθεμαι does not seem to be much different from the verb without the prefix. It is "to posit as a preliminary", and, according to Robinson, "comes nearest to the simple verb in terms of meaning"[269]. He later defines ὑπόθεσις as "what is posited as a beginning"[270]. The proximity in meaning between τίθημι

[268] ROBINSON, R., *Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1953, 94. See also IDEM, L'emploi des hypothèses selon Platon, *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* 59 (1954), 253-268.
[269] IDEM, *Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1953, 95.
[270] *Ibidem*, 99.

and ὑποτίθεμαι suggests that the latter word will only cover those beliefs and opinions that are held consciously and deliberately, therefore excluding any kind of inexplicit belief or opinion.

This is an aspect of the notion that Robinson also emphasizes when describing what he dubs as "the method of hypothesis". Robinson identifies four main aspects of this method: it is a deliberate adoption of opinions; it uses deduction as opposed to intuition; it avoids contradictions; it is provisional and tentative[271]. As is the case with our characterisation of the "modern" notion, the Platonic notion consists on the deliberate and explicit adoption of provisional and tentative theses that may serve as the foundation of subsequent knowledge – and hence the use of deduction and the need to avoid contradiction[272]. This method is to be understood as a "method of approximation", a way

[271] *Ibidem*, 105ff.

[272] See ROBINSON, *ibidem*, 95: "῾Υποτίθεμαι or 'hypothesize' is to posit as a preliminary. It conveys the notion of laying down a proposition as the beginning of a process of thinking, in order to work on the basis thereof. So far as the nature of this process of thinking is made explicit, it turns out to be the drawing of consequences from the proposition hypothesized, or the rejecting of propositions found to be inconsistent therewith, and thus obtaining a systematic or at least consistent body of propositions." See also, IDEM, 161: "Hypothetisizing a proposition includes both holding it as the beginning of a train of thought, and holding it tentatively." See as well NETTLESHIP, R. L., *Lectures on the Republic of Plato*, London, Mcmillan, 1901, 252: "Plato meant by a hypothesis a truth which is assumed to be ultimate or primary when it really depends upon some higher truth; not that it is untrue or could ever be proved false, but that it is treated for the present as self-conditioned". These definitions of the Platonic notion of ὑπόθεσις suggest a great degree of similarity with the "modern" notion of hypothesis. See also: JACKSON, H., On Plato's Republic VI 509dsqq., *Journal of Philology* 10 (1882), 132-150; ARCHER-HIND, R. D. (ed.), *The Phaedo of Plato*, London, Macmillan, 1894, 102; ADAM, J. (ed.), *The Republic of Plato*, vol. II, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1902, 66, 174ff.; ALTENBURG, M., *Die Methode der Hypothesis bei Platon, Aristoteles und Proklus*, Rostock, Boldt, 1905; TAYLOR, A. E., *Varia Socratica*. First Series, Oxford, J. Parker, 1911, 214ff.; BURNET, J. (ed.), *Plato's Phaedo*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1911, ad 92d6, 101d3; THIEL, N. M., *Ueber Begriff und Wort Hypothesis bei Platon und Aristoteles*, diss. Freiburg, 1918; RITTER, C., Platons Logik, *Philologus* 75 (1919), 1-67, 304-322; SOUILHÉ, *La notion Platonicienne d'intermédiaire dans la philosophie des dialogues*, Paris, Alcan, 1919, 103ff.; NATORP, P., *Platos Ideenlehre*. Eine Einführung in den Idealismus, 2nd ed., Leipzig, Meiner, 1921, 192ff., 206f.; TUMARKIN, A., Die Methode und die Grenze der Methode bei Plato: die ὑπόθεσις und das ἀνπόθετον, in: BAYER, R. (ed.), *Travaux du Ixe Congrès International de Philosophie*, Congrès Descartes, Paris, Hermann, 1937, 101-107; HACKFORTH, R., Plato's Divided Line and Dialectic I The Third Segment of the Line, *Classical Quarterly* (1942), 1-9; BLUCK, R. S. (ed.), *Plato's Phaedo*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955, 160ff.; HACKFORTH, R. (ed.), *Plato's Phaedo*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1955, 133, 136ff.; STAHL, H.-P., *Interpretationen zu Platons Hypothesis-Verfahren*: Menon, Phaidon, Staat, diss. Kiel, 1956; VANHOUTTE, M., *La méthode ontologique de Platon*, Louvain, Presses Universitaires de Louvain, 1956, 42ff.; BLUCK, R. S., ὑπόθεσις in the Phaedo and Platonic Dialectic, *Phronesis* 2 (1957), 21-31; CLASSEN, *op. cit.*, 72ff. (1959); PLASS, P., Socrates' method of hypothesis in the Phaedo, *Phronesis* 5 (1960), 103-115; ROSE, L. E., *Hypothesis and Deduction in Plato's Methodology*, diss. University of Pennsylvania, 1961; ICKLER, H. T., *Platons sogenanntes Hypothesis-Verfahren*, diss. Marburg, 1963; ROBINSON, R., Up and Down in Plato's Logic, *American Journal of Philology* 84 (1963), 300-303; JÄGER, *«Nus» in Platons Dialogen*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967, 65ff., 152f.; BOYLE, A. J., Plato's Divided Line, Essay I: The Problem of dianoia, *Apeiron* 7 (1973), 1-11; SCOLNICOV, S., Hypothetical Method and Rationality in Plato, *Kant-Studien* 66 (1975), 159-187; DORTER K., The dialectic of Plato's method of hypothesis, *Philosophical Forum* 7 (1976), 159-187; VICKERS, D. W., *Hypothesis*: The Platonic Concept and its Background in Literature and Medicine, diss. University of Texas Austin, 1977;

of getting closer to attaining the truth. It is, in this sense, a second-best alternative to actually being in possession of true knowledge. By using ὑποθέσεις, one can set out the foundations of subsequent knowledge. New theses can be deduced from the ὑποθέσεις and subjected to examination. However, the tentative nature of the ὑποθέσεις still remains a substantial limitation: the new theses are not deduced from an absolutely true principle, but rather from principles the truth of which is still not assured. The fragility of this method, then, has to be compensated by the attention paid in avoiding contradiction, on the one hand, and the willingness to revise, discard and replace any ὑπόθεσις that might be found to be wrong, on the other.

This general characterization of the notion of ὑπόθεσις is remarkable for its similarity to what we have described as the "modern" notion of hypothesis. So far it seems that the word ὑπόθεσις is as true a friend as one could hope for. This being the case, in what way can the word ὑπόθεσις be considered a "false friend"? The answer to this question lies in the fact that the notion of ὑπόθεσις has a wider meaning than its modern counterpart. By this we mean that Robinson's characterisation of the notion of ὑπόθεσις is only appropriate when applied to certain uses of the term. It is correct, but, as we shall

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LAFRANCE, Y., *La théorie Platonicienne de la doxa*, Montreal/Paris, Bellarmin/Les Belles Lettres, 1981, 156; KARASMANIS, V., *The Hypothetical Method in Plato's Middle Dialogues*, diss. University of Oxford, 1987; FINE, G., Knowledge and Belief in Republic V-VII, in: EVERSON, S. (ed.), *Epistemology* (Companions to Ancient Thought 1), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, 85-115; SCOLNICOV, S., Love and the Method of Hypothesis, *Methexis* 5 (1992), 69-77; LAFRANCE, Y., *Pour Interpréter Platon* II La ligne en République VI, 509d-511e. Le texte et son histoire, Montreal, Bellarmin, 1994, 306, 308, 318, 365ff.; CLUDIUS, M., *Die Grundlegung der Erkenntnistheorie in Platons Politeia*. Ein Kommentar zu Platons Unterscheidung von Meinen und Wissen und zum Liniengleichnis, Diss. Marburg, Lahn, 1997, 170ff.; DIXSAUT, M., *Les metamorphoses de la dialectique dans les dialogues de Platon*, Paris, Vrin, 2001, 81f.; EBERT, T., Sokrates über seinen Umgang mit Hypotheseis (« Phaidon » 100 a) : ein Problem und ein Vorschlag zur Lösung, *Hermes* 129 (2001), 467-473; BENSON, H. H., The method of hypothesis in the « Meno », in CLEARY, J. J., GURTLER, G. M., *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* 18, 2002, Leiden, Boston (Mass.), Brill, 2003, 95-126; FISCHER, F., La « méthode » et les « hypothèses » en Phédon 99d-102a, *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 100 (2002), 650-680; FISCHER, F., La «méthode» et les «hypothèses» en Phédon 99d-102a, *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 100 (2002), 650-680; TEISSERENC, F., *Discours et image chez Platon*, diss. Paris I, 2003, 342ff. REPELLINI, F. F., La linea e la caverna, in: VEGETTI, M. (ed.), *Platone La Repubblica*, vol. V, Libro VI-VII, Napoli, Bibliopolis, 2003, 355-403; NETZ, R., How Propositions Begin: Towards an Interpretation of hypothesis in Plato's Divided Line, *Hyperboreus* 9 (2003), 295-317; CAMBIANO, G., La méthode par hypothèse en République II, in: DIXSAUT, M. (ed.), *Études sur la République de Platon* 2. De la science, du bien et des mythes, Paris, Vrin, 2005, 9-24; THURNHER, R., Platons Liniengleichnis und die Frage der Hypotheseis. Erprobung eines neuen Paradigmas, in: BARBARIC, D. (ed.), *Platon über das Gute und die Gerechtigkeit. Platon on Goodness and Justice. Platone sul Bene e sulla Giustizia*, Würzburg, Königshausen & Neumann, 2005, 109-120; BYRD, M. N., Dialectic and Plato's method of hypothesis, *Apeiron* 40 (2007), 141-158; CARVALHO, M. J., Μέθοδος e ὑπόθεσις – o problema do pressuposto na fundação platónica da ciência, in: FERRER, D. (ed.), *Método e Métodos do Pensamento Filosófico*, Coimbra, Imprensa da Universidade, 2007, 9-6917ff.; CHIESA, C., La réfutation socratique et la méthode hypothétique, in LONGO, A.. DEL FORNO, D. (ed.), Argument from hypothesis in ancient philosophy, Napoli, Bibliopolis, 2011, 75-93.

see, it is too narrow to be applied to all the instances of the term. What we will be looking for in the next few pages is a more general understanding of the notion of ὑπόθεσις – one that can include Robinson's characterisation, but that does not leave out important applications of the term. For this purpose, we will now concentrate our attention on the meaning and usage of this notion in *Republic* VI and VII[273].

2. Ὑπόθεσις in *Republic*

The notion of ὑπόθεσις is the object of elaborate and extensive treatment in *Republic* VI and VII. However, not only is this treatment very complex, it is also introduced in the context of the very complicated and widely debated analogy of the divided line (509d1-511e5)[274]. In order to understand the meaning of the notion of ὑπόθεσις and the role it might play in our understanding of the erotic speeches of the *Phaedrus*, we need to engage in a brief discussion of the analogy of the divided line[275].

The analogy of the divided line is used as a way of illustrating the contrast between beings of different ontological consistency and the corresponding contrast between the different forms of access to these beings. Socrates does this by making us imagine a line unequally divided and by establishing correspondences between each section and subsection and the different kinds of being and respective mode of access. This has already been anticipated by a scale of sorts introduced in book V (476e8ff.) – a scale that, like the divided line, establishes relations of correspondence between modes of being and modes of access. To the opposition between ὄν and μὴ ὄν correspond two different and

[273] We have chosen to concentrate on specific passages of *Republic* to illustrate the diversity of meaning of the notion of ὑπόθεσις, which the "modern" term hypothesis is incapable of rendering. We are in no way stating that the shades of meaning found in the passages we are going to analyse exclude a meaning of ὑπόθεσις very similar to the "modern" term. In fact, numerous passages of the *corpus Platonicum* suggest otherwise: see, e.g., *Eutyphron* 11c5; *Gorgias* 454c4; *Hippias Maior* 302e12; *Laws* 743c5, 812a4; *Meno* 86e3, 86e4, 87a2, 87d3, 89c3; *Parmenides* 127d7, 128d5, 136a1, 136a4, 136b2, 137b3, 142b1, 142c2, 142c9, 160b7, 161b8; *Phaedo* 92d6, 94b1, 101d2, 101d3, 101d7, 107b5; *Politicus* 295c9; *Republic* 550c6; *Theaetetus* 183b3; *Timaeus* 26a6; *Sophist* 237a3, 244c4. On the other hand, from this long list of passages within the corpus, one might be inclined to believe that any deviation from this meaning would most likely be an anomaly. It is our intention to show that that is not the case; that it is rather the meaning of ὑπόθεσις that is similar to the "modern" notion that, whilst not exactly an anomaly, represents an "over-determined" variant of a much simpler notion, which can be reduced to a much less determined and more inclusive core.

[274] For an overview of the debate surrounding the analogy of the divided line, see ANNAS, J., *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1981, 247ff.

[275] Throughout this section and the next, I will rely heavily on the insights and analyses found in CARVALHO, M. J., Μέθοδος e ὑπόθεσις – o problema do pressuposto na fundação platónica da ciência, in: FERRER, D. (ed.), Método e Métodos do Pensamento Filosófico, Coimbra, Imprensa da Universidade, 2007, 9-69.

opposed modes of access, γνῶσις or ἐπιστήμη and ἀγνωσία or ἄγνοια. The term "modes of access", however, cannot be applied accurately to both these relationships. In fact, ἄγνοια consists in the complete lack of access, the proper relationship to what does not at all exist. In between these two modes of being, so to speak, between what is described as τοῦ εἰλικρινῶς ὄντος and τοῦ αὖ μηδαμῇ ὄντος, there is something that both is and is not, which is designed as μεταξύ[276]. To this intermediate kind of being corresponds an

[276] On the notion of μεταξύ, see, for example: HARTMANN, N., *Platons Logik des Seins*, Giessen, Töpelmann, 1909, Berlin, de Gruyter, 1965 (2nd edition), 100, 184, 305, 337ff., 398; ROBIN, L., *La théorie Platonicienne des idées et des nombres d'après Aristote*. Étude historique et critique, Paris, Alcan, 1908; IDEM, *La théorie Platonicienne de l'amour*, Paris, Alcan, 1908; SOUILHÉ, J., *La notion Platonicienne de l'intermédiaire dans la philosophie des dialogues*, Paris, Alcan, 1919; NATORP, *Platos Ideenlehre*. Eine Einführung in den Idealismus, Leipzig, Meinen, 1921, 2nd edition, 115f., 186ff., 194ff., 437ff.; DIÈS, A., *Autour de Platon*. Essais de critique et d'histoire, Paris, Beauchesne, 1926, II, IV, §4, 375-384, IV, II, §2, 472-485; KRANZ, W., Diotima von Mantineia, *Hermes* 61 (1926), 437-447; CALOGERO, G., *Il Simposio di Platone*. Versione e saggio introdutivo, Bari, Laterza, 1928, 34ff.; FRIEDLÄNDER, P., *Platon* I, Berlin, de Gruyter, 1928, 45ff.; ROBIN, L. (ed.), *Platon: oeuvres complètes*, vol. IV, part 2, *Le Banquet*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1929, LXXVIIff.; DEMOS, R., Eros, *The Journal of Philosophy* 13 (1934), 337-345; GLASER, K., Gang und Ereignis des platonischen Lysis, *Wiener Studien* 53 (1935), 47-67; HARDIE, W. F. R., *A Study in Plato*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1936, 35ff., 117ff., 127ff.; KOOP, H., *Über der Lehrbarkeit der Tugend*. Untersuchungen zum platonischen und nachplatonischen Problem des Lehrens und Lernens, Würzburg-Aumühle, Konrad Triltsch Verlag, 1940, 26ff., 38ff., 66f.; HACKFORTH, R., Plato's Divided Line and Dialectic I The Third Segment of the Line, *Classical Quarterly* 36 (1942), 1-9; FESTUGIÈRE, A.-J. (ed.), *Hippocrate. L'ancienne médicine*, Paris, Klincksieck, 1948, 47-53; BOUSSOULAS, N., Essai sur la structure du mélange dans la pensée présocratique. Héraclite, *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* 60 (1955), 287-298; WEDBERG, A., *Plato's Philosophy and the Mathematics*, Stockholm, Almquist & Wixell, 1955, 10ff., 84-135; MOORHOUSE, A. C., *Studies in the Greek Negatives*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1959, 66ff.; KRÄMER, H. J., *Arete bei Platon und Aristoteles*. Zum Wesen und zur Geschichte der platonischen Ontologie, Heidelberg, Winter, 1959, 493ff.; GULLEY, N., *Plato's Theory of Knowledge*, London, Metheun, 1962, 169ff.; BURKERT, W., *Weisheit und Wissenschaft*. Studien zu Pythagoras, Philolaos und Platon, Nürnberg, Carl, 1962, 417ff.; GAISER, K., *Platons ungeschriebene Lehre*. Studien zur systematischen und geschichtlichen Begründung der Wissenschaften in ter Platonischen Schule, Stuttgart, Klett, 1963, 46ff., 89ff.; BRENTLINGER, J. A., The Divided Line and Plato's Theory of Intermediates, *Phronesis* 8 (1963), 146-166; CHIEREGHIN, F., *Storicità e originarietà nell'idea Platonica*, Firenze, Olschki, 1963, 49ff., 76ff.; RIST, J. M., Equals and Intermediates in Plato, *Phronesis* 9 (1964), 27-37; CROSS, R. C., WOOZLEY, A. D., *Plato's Republic*. A Philosophical Commentary, London/New York, Macmillan/St. Martin's Press, 1964, 233-238; HOFFMANN, Methexis und Metaxy bei Plato, in IDEM, *Drei Schriften zur griechischen Philosophie*, Heidelberg, Winter, 1964, 29-51; HUBER, E., *Anamnesis bei Plato*, München, Hueber, 1964, 50f., 69, 299f., 312f., 327ff., 351f., 403f., 418f., 421, 455ff., 460f., 475f., 481f., 539ff., 610; WIPPERN, J., Eros und Unsterblichkeit in der Diotima-Rede des Symposions, in FLASHAR, H., GAISER, K. (ed.), *Synusia*. Festgabe für W. Schadewaldt zum 15. März 1965, Pfullingen, Neske, 1965, 123-159; MÜLLER, C. W., *Gleiches zum Gleichem*. Ein Prinzip frühgriechischen Denkens, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 1965, 178ff.; VLASTOS, G., Degrees of Reality in Plato, in BAMBROUGH, R. (ed.), *New Essays on Plato and Aristotle*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965, 1-19; HARE, R. M., Plato and the Mathematicians, in: BAMBROUGH, R. (ed.), *New Essays on Plato and Aristotle*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965, 21-38; BUCHNER, H., *Eros und Sein*. Erörterungen zu Platons Symposion, Bonn, Bouvier, 1965, 55-95; SCHMALZRIEDT, E., *Platon*. Der Schriftsteller und die Warheit, München, Piper, 1969; LEROY, D., Μεταξύ, *Les Études Classiques* 35 (1967), 321-331; O'BRIEN, *op. cit*., 132; MOREAU, J., *Le sens du platonisme*, Paris, Belles Lettres, 1967, 150ff.; PETERS, H., *Platons Lysis*. Untersuchungen zur Problematik des Gedankenganges und zur Gestalt des Kunstwerks, Witterschlick b. Bonn, Schwarzbold, 1968, 60ff., 136ff.; TIELSCH, E., *Die platonischen Versionen der griechischen Doxalehre*. Ein philosophisches Lexikon mit Kommentar, Meisenheim Gl., Hain, 1970, 60ff., 109ff., 126f.; DELCOURT, M., Ultrumque-Neutrum, in BAREAU, A. (ed.), *Mélanges d'histoire des religions*: offerts à Henri-Charles Puech, Paris, Presses Universitaires de

intermediate mode of access – δόξα. Therefore, we have a scale of being to which corresponds a scale of modes of access. To μὴ ὄν, the absence of being, corresponds the absence of any kind of access, ἀγνωσία or ἄγνοια. To being, ὄν, corresponds a mode of

France, 1974, 117-123; DIMITRAKÓPOULOS, M., *Die 'Mischung' und das Reine in der platonischen Dialetik*, diss. Freiburg i. Br., 1974; FOGELIN, R. J., Three Platonic Analogies, *Philosophical Review* 83 (1974), 371-382; GUTHRIE, *op. cit.*, 342ff., 385ff., 509f., 523; ANNAS, J., On the Intermediates, *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 57 (1975), 146-166; NAPOLITANO, L. M., Sul rapport tra matematica e dialettica in Platone, *Atti del Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* 134 (1975-1976), 285-310; WHITE, F. C., *Plato on Knowledge and Reality*, Indianapolis, Hackett, 1976, 109f.; WHITE, F. C., The "Many" in Republic 475e-480a, *Canadian Journal of Philosophical* 7 (1977), 291-306; GOSLING, J. C. B., Reply to White, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 7 (1977), 307-314; MOURELATOS, A. P. D., Nothing as Not Being. Some Literary Contexts that Bear on Plato, in BOWERSOCK, G., BURKERT, W., PUTNAM, M. (ed.), *Arktouros*. Hellenic Studies Presented to Bernard M. W. 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access that renders reality as it really is, γνῶσις or ἐπιστήμη. To that which is between being and non-being, μεταξύ, corresponds a mode of access that is itself an intermediate between the total lack of access and complete, unhindered and absolute access: δόξα. In other words, different degrees of being, from its complete absence to the opposite, claim and demand different corresponding modes of access in order to be revealed.

Socrates then considers the subject of the δυνάμεις (477c1ff.). In his definition of δύναμις, Socrates enunciates two distinguishing criteria. Different δυνάμεις will differ from each other in: 1. that to which the δύναμις regards ("ἐφ' ᾧ τε ἔστι"); 2. what the δύναμις accomplishes ("ὃ ἀπεργάζεται"). In the subsequent discussion, Socrates explores the distinction between the δυνάμεις that are part of the scale: on the one hand, γνῶσις or ἐπιστήμη, on the other, δόξα. As expected, ἀγνωσία or ἄγνοια is not even considered, since it is not a δύναμις, but rather the designation for the lack of access that is the correlate of non-being. Socrates only considers the δυνάμεις that correspond to ὄν and μεταξύ. That which the δυνάμεις at stake in the scale relate to is straightforward: γνῶσις or ἐπιστήμη relates to ὄν, whereas δόξα relates to those beings that are described as μεταξύ. What each of these δυνάμεις accomplishes can sometimes be more problematic. As γνῶσις or ἐπιστήμη is the perfect access to ὄν, the former reveals the latter with complete clarity. Δόξα, on the other hand, consists in a less clear form of access to a kind of being that is inferior to ὄν, but above non-being. It is situated, in respect to what it accomplishes, between the absolute clarity of γνῶσις or ἐπιστήμη and the complete obscurity of ἀγνωσία or ἄγνοια. When seen from the point of view of the δυνάμεις, this scale changes in one significant aspect. Before, the mode of being demanded a specific mode of access; now, it is the mode of access that reveals the ontic consistency of the mode of being to which it regards. The mode of access reveals the being: ὄν can only be revealed through γνῶσις, and this means that one needs γνῶσις to have access to ὄν. Without γνῶσις, if there is any kind of access, that access will be in the form of δόξα. What δόξα brings forth, however, is never ὄν, rather always something that is less than ὄν, but more than μὴ ὄν, something that is always necessarily lacking when compared to ὄν.

The divided line consists in an unpacking of this scale – not from the point of view of the modes of being, but from the point of view of the δυνάμεις. The scale of book V establishes the structure of the allegory of the divided line: the three first subsections correspond to different degrees of what is identified in book V as μεταξύ, while the fourth

subsection corresponds to γνῶσις. What the divided line does then is deformalize the cognitive situation described in the scale of book V: it presents different modalities in which δόξα occurs, and the kinds of being that these different modalities reveal. To be more precise, the divided line illustrates the second distinctive criterion of the δυνάμεις of book V: ὃ ἀπεργάζεται. The divided line shows different degrees of δόξα, i.e., δόξα characterised by different degrees of σαφήνεια and ἀσάφεια, and how this reveals or fails to reveal different kinds of being. The fact that the divided line is a deformalisation or an unpacking of the scale of book V can also been seen by certain verbal clues, certain formulations and terms both passages have in common and that play fundamental roles in both scales. In both scales, the variation between the different degrees is dependent on the varying degrees of σαφήνεια and ἀσάφεια (478c11; 509d9); both scales make use of the fundamental contrast between δοξαστόν and γνωστόν (477a3ff.; 510a9). The divided line, however, excludes the first term of the scale of book V: non-being and its correlate ἀγνωσία or ἄγνοια. The reason for this is straightforward: the divided line is an illustration of how access to reality, or, to be more precise, presentation occurs; ἀγνωσία or ἄγνοια are the absence of any presentation. Therefore, the scale expressed in the divided line starts at the second term of the scale of book V. The beings that constitute the content of the presentation of the very bottom of the scale of the divided line will already have a *quantum minimum* of being – they are already μεταξύ non-being and being.

The division of the line is done in stages. The first division establishes the contrast between the two sections that correspond, respectively, to τὸ ὁρατόν and τὸ νοητόν (509d1-4). Each of these two sections is further divided into two smaller sections. Τὸ ὁρατόν is therefore divided into two more subsections, and so is τὸ νοητόν. In total, the line is divided into four subsections. The first of these subsections corresponds to those beings that Socrates designates as εἰκόνες, of which he gives as examples shadows (σκιαί), and two kinds of reflection: reflections on water, and reflections on other kinds of surface (509e1-510a6). The second subsection within τὸ ὁρατόν contains those beings of which the εἰκόνες are εἰκόνες, i.e., the "originals", the "things themselves", of which shadows and reflections are but images and copies.

The line is established by using what has been designated as a "Heraclitian

scheme": as X is to Y, so is Y to Z[277]. In the case of the divided line, as the beings included in the first subsection, images, are to their "originals", i.e., the "things themselves" that are part of the second subsection, so are these to the beings that correspond to the third subsection, and so forth. The fundamental operator is the notion of image, εἰκών, or, to be more precise, the relationship between images and the things they are images of. The first contrast is between images as we would normally understand them, shadows and reflections, and what can easily be recognized as their "originals", that of which they are images, i.e., the thing that casts a shadow or that can be reflected. The contrast between image and "the thing itself" is then also used to characterise the relation between the second and third subsections. The beings that were taken as the "things themselves" in the second subsection are, from the point of view of the third subsection, mere images. By the same token, the beings that are present in the third subsection will be relegated to the status of images when seen from the point of view of the fourth subsection.

It is clear from these last statements that the notion of "image" at stake here cannot be limited to the examples given by Socrates: shadows and different kinds of reflection. The way the divided line is structured entails a different understanding of what an image is, or, to be more precise, of what the relationship between an image and its "original" is, so that it can apply not only to what we can normally recognise as images, but also to the beings located in the second and third subsections. What this notion of image might be is something we will look into shortly. In the meanwhile, it is worth noting that the kinds of images mentioned as examples within the first subsection (sc. shadows, reflections on water and reflections on other surfaces) also constitute a scale of sorts, going from the

[277] The notion of "Heraclitian scheme" was introduced by Fränkel in his analysis of several fragments of Heraclitus, namely DK B 79, 82 and 83: as the man is to the δαίμων, so is the child to the man; as the monkey is to the man, so is the man to the god. See FRÄNKEL, H., Eine heraklitische Denkform, in: IDEM, *Wege und Formen frühgriechischen Denkens*, München, Beck, 1955, 3rd rev. ed., München, Beck, 1968, 252-283; IDEM, *Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen* Griechentums, München, Beck, 1962, 3rd rev. ed., 434ff. See also: REGENBOGEN, O., Eine Forschungesmethode antiker Naturwissenschaft, *Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte der Mathematik* 1 (1930), 131-182; DILLER, H., ὄψις ἀδήλων τὰ φαινόμενα, *Hermes* 67 (1932), 14-42; GRENET, P., *Les origines de l'analogie philosophique dans les dialogues de Platon*, Paris, Boivin, 1948; RIVIER, A. *Un emploi archaïque de l'analogie chez Héraclite et Thucydide*, Lausanne, F. Rouge, 1952; SCHUHL, P.-M., *La fabulation Platonicienne*, Paris, Vrin, 1968, 2nd rev. ed., 24ff.; JOLY, R., *Le Renversement Platonicien*. *Logos. Episteme. Polis*, Paris, Vrin, 1974, 258ff.; TAGLIAFERRO, E., Tipologia del paragone eracliteo, in: ROSSETTI, L. (ed.), *Atti del Symposium Heracliteum* 1981, Roma, Ed. dell' Ateneo, 1983, 169-180; MERKELBACH, R., Eine Interpolation im Liniengleichnis und die Verhältnisgleichungen mit Bemerkungen zu zwei anderen Stellen der Politeia, *Rheinisches Museum* 135 (1992), 235-245; ESPOSITO, M., Esempi di analogia matematica come struttura argomentativa in Platone, in: CASERTANO, G. (ed.), *La struttura del dialogo Platonico*, Napoli, Loffredo, 2000, 238-252. Further on in this study we will encounter several other instances of this scheme. See *infra*, p. 424ff., p. 465 ff., p. 558, n 448.

least clear to the most clear, without, however, ceasing to be images. They function as a sort of model, in small scale, of what can be found in a larger scale in the whole line, in the relationship between the three first subsections and the fourth: a hierarchy of images in relation to the thing itself.

To each subsection corresponds a different type of access: to the images, εἰκασία, to that of which the images are images, the "originals", the "things themselves", πίστις (511d6-e4)[278]. This, however, does not mean that if one sees the tree, one is unable to see the shadow of the tree. That would be absurd. These sections are not self-contained and isolated from each other. There is a degree of continuity between them. A perspective retained in the first subsection will not have access to the beings that correspond to the second subsection, but a perspective located in the second subsection will also have some form of access to the beings located in the first subsection. As with the scale of book V, the distinctive criterion is that of clarity and obscurity, σαφήνεια and ἀσάφεια. In other words, the further up one goes in the line, the higher the degree of clarity. But there will be a fundamental difference in the mode of access.

To understand what this difference might be, let us try to imagine what a perspective retained in the first subsection would be like. In the first place, we have to state the obvious: it would be a mode of access, as opposed to complete obscurity. This means that, regardless of how limited it may be in comparison to the other modes of access described in the line, it will include at the very least a *quantum minimum* of cognitive value.

Secondly, the objects of this mode of access are described as shadows and reflections, i.e., as images. The nature of an image is to be the image of something. It is,

[278] The term πίστις to designate the mode of access peculiar to the second subsection of the analogy of the divided line is only introduced in the summary at the end of *Republic* VI. It is then used again in the recapitulation of Republic *VII*, namely in 534a1 and 534a5. The term εἰκασία as the designation of the mode of access peculiar to the first subsection is also only to be found in the same passages, namely 511e2, 534a1 and 534a5. For most of the exposition in book VI, both these modes of access are nameless. The term εἰκών, however, is found throughout: 510b4, 510b8, 510e3, 511a6. On the notion of "image" in the context of the Divided Line, see CARVALHO (2007), 9-6917ff. See also: LIZANO-ORDOVÁS, M. A., Eikasia und Pistis in Platons Höhlengleichnis, *Zeitschrift für philosophiche Forschung* 49 (1995), 378-397; HAMLYN, D. W., Eikasia in Plato's Republic. *Philosophical Quarterly* 8 (1958), 14-23; ROTONDARO, S., Sulla nozione di eikasia in Platone, Resp. VI-VII, *Atti della Accademia di Scienze Morali e Politiche della Società Nazionale di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti di Napoli* 110 (1999), 103-117; PATTERSON, R., Image and reality in Plato's metaphysics, Indianapolis, Hackett, 1985; RINGBOM S., Plato on images, *Theoria* 31 (1965), 86-109; DOMINICK, Y. H., Seeing through images: the bottom of Plato's Divided Line, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 48 (2010), 1-13; MILLS, D. H., *Image and symbol in Plato's Republic*, Univ. of Iowa, Iowa City, 1971.

in its very essence, a kind of being that is understood in relation to something else. But images are not just merely relational entities, but rather entities whose very essence depends on this specific relationship. They are identified and understood as images of the thing they are supposed to represent – to such an extent that their other determinations are pushed into the background. The essence of a bust of Socrates resides in the fact that it represents or is understood as representing a likeness of Socrates the man. Without this relationship, the bust is nothing more than an oddly shaped piece of marble. In other words, the essence of an image does not reside in itself, but rather in the original of which it is an image. An image is a being that points towards something else – something else that is where its essence resides. An image is therefore something whose essence is outside itself[279].

But this leads us to an interesting conclusion. Since an image is a being whose essence resides somewhere else, a perspective retained in the first subsection would be incapable of identifying the objects those images are the images of. This can mean one of two things: either this perspective is unable to recognize the images as images (taking them as originals instead of images), or it can recognise the images as images, but is prevented from having any access to the "things themselves". In the first case, this perspective would be completely oblivious to the beings that belong to the second subsection, to the point that it would not even be aware of the possibility of such a thing as the type of access and beings represented by the second subsection. This would be a perspective that would not exhibit any tension to surpass its own limitations, since it would not even be aware that there were any to surpass. The second case, however, is very different. A perspective retained in the first subsection would only be able to have access to images, but these images would be recognized *as images*, i.e., as beings whose essence resides outside themselves, dependent on the being of the "things themselves", or "originals". What is subtracted from this perspective is the ability to access these "originals". This means that the access to the images would be accompanied by the awareness that the "things themselves" were out of reach. This would create a form of access painfully aware of its own limitation. Since it only sees images as images, this is a perspective whose access is dominated by the awareness that there is something beyond its reach that holds the key to the very beings it has access to. It is not unlikely that this

[279] See below, p. 525ff.

awareness would be translated into a yearning to surpass these limits.

The Platonic text does not allow us to choose which of these possible interpretations is the most likely. What is clear is that in either case the first subsection corresponds to a state of affairs far removed from our experience. In the divided line, there is a substantial difference between an image and the "thing itself". They exist in different planes, are the object of different kinds of access; the former is a degraded and inferior version of the latter, pointing out towards it, without, however, reaching it. This substantial difference is one of the main constitutive elements of the understanding expressed by the line itself.

This is, however, a perspective that differs radically from how the distance between image and the thing itself is normally understood in our natural, non-philosophical, non-platonic point of view. The way we normally understand images does not emphasize the distance between image and "original" or "thing itself". What is brought to the forefront is how effective the image is, how, through the image, we are put in contact with the "original". Through the image we are as if immediately placed before the thing itself, without obstacle or hindrance. This is the case because, with the kinds of images we are normally in contact with, we have had already, in some way or another, contact with the things they are images of, or at the very least, with things that are very similar to them. So when we are before an image we are not before a being that points out to something beyond itself, to which we have no access to – what it points out to is, on the contrary, something we already know and have access to. In our normal perspective, image and thing are seen as if coexisting in the same planes, not, as it is case in the divided line, in different planes, accessed by different kinds of perspective. Our normal experience of images is such that, in the terms of the divided line, we are already beyond the first subsection – capable of recognising the beings the images are images of, but, however, without the acute awareness of the radical difference between image and thing itself. The first subsection is only understandable from a perspective already situated at least in the second subsection, i.e., from a perspective that is not entirely dominated by images[280].

[280] See CROSS and WOZLEY, *op. cit.*, 208-228; HAMLYN, *op. cit.*; SZE, C., Εἰκασία and πίστις in Plato's cave allegory, *Classical Quarterly* 27 (1977), 127-138. Sed contra: STOCKS, J. L., The Divided Line of Plato Rep. VI, *Classical Quarterly* 5 (1911), 73-88; FERGUSON, A. F., Plato's Simile of Light. Part I. The Similes of The Sun and The Line, *Classical Quarterly* 15 (1921), 131-152; DOMINICK, Y., *op. cit.*

We might conclude from what we have seen above that our perspective has no experience of what it means to be retained in what is described in the first subsection of the divided line. However, the matter is much more complicated. We may have, in fact, an experience of the same kind: dreams. A dream is, in most cases, a perspective closed within itself. It reveals something, it shows something – but only insofar as there is a *quantum minimum* of presentation. In other words, what appears to us in dreams, the oneiric content, is more than the absence of any kind of presentation whatever, complete obscurity. The oneiric or dreamlike perspective, however, is closed as if in a cocoon. In most dreams there is no contact with what is outside the dream, waking life. The oneiric content presents itself as something real, as real as the kind of presentation we usually have while awake. While within the dream, the oneiric content is not understood as being merely oneiric: it is seen, identified, lived as if it were real, as being undistinguishable from the contents that populate our waking perspective. It is only in retrospect, and in contrast with our waking perspective that one is usually able to identify the oneiric content as something less than real. As such, a dream is a kind of presentation that hides everything: not only the presentation that corresponds to our waking perspective, but also its own oneiric status. It is, in the terms of the divided line, an image that shows itself as if it were "the original", the "thing itself". Dreams that appear as waking life, as images that appear as the "things themselves", are therefore covered in two layers of obscurity: the first layer corresponds to the lack of contact with the "thing itself"; the second, to the lack of contact with the dream as dream, with the image as image. By this we mean that, since the image is presented as something that the image is not (i.e., the "thing itself"), its true nature as image remains hidden.

Being in a dream is a common experience akin to being encapsulated within a perspective dominated by images. It creates a bubble around itself, in such a way that the content of the dream is understood as being the thing itself, real. But sometimes, for some reason, that bubble is pierced, and one may find oneself still within a dream, but now realising that the oneiric content is precisely just that – and less than real. In the terms of the divided line, this is a situation in which one is retained in a plane of reality populated by images, which are now recognised as mere images. This situation can be better understood when seen in contrast with the other forms of relationship between images and the "things themselves": the easy, undisturbed relationship that characterises our normal perspective, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the false identification

between image and "thing itself" that occurs in most of our oneiric experiences. In the former case, the relationship is peaceful. The image is effective in performing its task, i.e., putting in contact with the "thing itself". Being in contact with the image is the starting point to a mechanism of remission to the "thing itself". Since the essence of the image is located in the thing the image is an image of, and since the image is capable of putting us in contact with the "thing itself", there is no tension or deficit to disturb this state of affairs. In the latter case, however, the image is not recognised as an image at all; it appears as the "thing itself". Its nature as image is hidden. There is no tension between image and "thing itself", not because the image fulfils its task, but precisely for the opposite reason. It is because the image is completely contained within itself, enclosed, blocked, and incapable of pointing towards that in which its essence resides that it appears at the thing itself, sc. as something whose essence resides within itself.

It is only when the image is recognised as image and, at the same time, the mechanism of remission towards the "thing itself" is somehow blocked that the tension arises. When this happens, the image loses contact with that of which it is an image – and this loss of contact becomes painfully obvious. This brings to the forefront how the connection with the image is severed, how the image points towards something else, the very thing that contains the image's essence, without, however, being able to put in contact with it. The mechanism of remission to the "thing itself" is half-broken: the image does not give even a glimpse of what the "thing itself" might be, but, on the other hand, the tension towards the "thing itself" remains. Like someone stuck within a dream that is now recognised as a dream (i.e., a dream that no longer presents itself as waking life) one's perspective is now thrust towards waking life, the "thing itself". But as to someone who cannot wake up, what waking life might be, what the "thing itself" might be presents itself as something unknown. The tension towards the "thing itself" becomes stronger, as one's awareness of the nature of the image as image, of the dream as dream, becomes more acute.

Our most ordinary experience, however, is very different. We dream, and then we wake up. Dreams are but islands of perspective dominated by images in a life that is otherwise understood as the bearer of a perspective that puts us in contact with the "things themselves". In the terms of the divided line, the most common experience is to be already beyond the first subsection, at the very least at the level described in the second subsection. In fact, it would seem that our perspective's normal abode is located within the second

subsection. The kind of beings that correspond to the second subsections, animals and plants and man-made objects, are all beings to which we normally have access. They make up what we normally recognize as being real. So it seems that our position within the line is relatively clear, and so is the form of access that characterises our perspective: well within the second subsection.

But even this is far from clear. A whole section of the line, the one pertaining to τὰ νοητά, remains to be analysed. If the line is indeed an attempted description of our perspective, or the possibilities of our perspective, then it is reasonable to assume that the third and fourth subsections are somehow relevant to the understanding of what our perspective is or can be.

In what regards the relationship between the two sections of the line, Socrates explicitly states that the first is to the second as the images are to their originals (510a8-10)[281]. This is an impressive claim, especially when seen in the light of what we have seen so far. In order to better understand what this might mean, let us once again make use of the thought-experiment we used when considering the first subsection, but now applying it to the second subsection. In other words, let us now consider what a perspective retained in the second subsection would be like. First, however, we have to consider what kind of access we have to the beings described as populating the second subsection. These beings, as we have noticed, seem to be the ones we are most familiar with, the beings we have immediate access to whenever we open our eyes. They are the "originals" of the images described in the first subsection: the tree that casts the shadow, the animal reflected in the water, ourselves reflected in a mirror[282]. If in the first subsection we are invited to look at the shadow, at the reflection, in short, at the image, in the second subsection we are made to look at the "originals", at the things the images are images of. The examples seem to indicate that we are dealing with beings that are accessed through sense perception, αἴσθησις. But so are the images, the beings that pertain to the first subsection. Both types of being are, in this sense, ὁρατά.

[281] Socrates does not use the terms τὸ ὅρατον and τὸ νοητόν at this point in the text, but rather τὸ δοξαστόν and τὸ γνωστόν. Τὸ δοξαστόν is used interchangeably with τὸ ὅρατον in opposition to τὸ νοητόν in 534a6-7. Note that those were the terms used in the scale of book 5, which we have discussed earlier. On this terminological change, see ADAM, *ad locum*. On the relationship between the sections as analogue to the relationship between image and original, see ROBINSON (1953), 195; SINAIKO, *op. cit.*, 156; MILLS, K. W., Plato's "non-hypothetical starting point", *Durham University Journal* 31 (1970), 152-159.
[282] Cf. p. 532, infra.

To define the beings that pertain to the second subsection primordially as correlates of sense perception will perhaps make sense when we are trying to understand them in contrast with the beings that pertain to the third subsection. It will not, however, distinguish them from the beings in the first subsection. In the terms of the divided line, what distinguishes the beings of the second subsection from the beings of the first is the fact that the latter are images of the former. But to use this criterion to distinguish between the beings that pertain to the first two subsections from the ones that pertain to the subsequent two is perhaps also very limited, and not entirely accurate. This distinction may seem, at first sight, neat and orderly: τὰ ὁρατά are those things that are perceived through our bodily senses, whereas τὰ νοητά includes everything that exceeds that. However, we need only to be reminded that, in the terms of the divided line, the third subsection is also said to make use of beings described as ὁρώμενα (510d3), to start suspecting the distinction might be a bit fuzzier. In fact, if we were to be limited to the data that we are given access to by our bodily senses, our perspective would be radically different from the one we normally have. Our normal perspective is composed of much more than sense perception. More than that: in order to have the presentation of what we normally understand as objects of sense perception, we already need to make use of beings that would, according to the distinction set above, number among the νοητά. By this we mean the myriad of concepts, notions and theses that constitute our normal perspective and without which sense perception would be meaningless: notions such as identity, quantity or position, to name just a few. Our sense perception is teeming with what some would call "extra-sensorial" elements, which are nonetheless absolutely crucial for the constitution of a perspective such as ours.

We can perhaps get a valuable hint about what might be at stake in the distinction between the second and the third subsections if we examine the notion of αἴσθησις a bit more closely. Besides "sense perception", αἴσθησις has another important meaning, especially relevant for our purposes. This meaning comes to the forefront, for example, in the first definition of ἐπιστήμη in the *Theaetetus* – the very definition provided at first by Theaetetus, in 151e1ff. In this passage, Theaetetus defines ἐπιστήμη as αἴσθησις, but he formulates the definition in such a way as to suggest that αἴσθησις might mean something different from "sense perception": "δοκεῖ οὖν μοι ὁ ἐπιστάμενός τι αἰσθάνεσθαι τοῦτο ὃ ἐπίσταται, καὶ ὥς γε νυνὶ φαίνεται, οὐκ ἄλλο τί ἐστιν ἐπιστήμη ἢ αἴσθησις." It seems to Theaetetus that the one who knows something "αἰσθάνεσθαι" (this

shall remain untranslated for now) that which he knows. In this passage Theaetetus is using the verb αἰσθάνεσθαι not in the sense of perceiving something through one's senses, but with another meaning: to grasp something immediately, to perceive (not necessarily with one's senses) immediately.

With this Theaetetus is alluding to a common experience: when one knows something, one can have that easily, immediately available. For the one who knows, knowledge is evident. It is there, just within your grasp, ready to be used and applied. One does not need to search for it, to go on on a hunt for it; one just needs to pick it up. It is in this way that I know my mother's name, my date of birth, the names of all English and British monarchs since William the Conqueror, or which πόλις Socrates was a citizen of. What is at stake here is an immediacy of use and possession, not necessarily an immediacy of acquisition. We may have needed to learn it, and at the cost of considerable time and effort – and yet, once acquired, and if it does not slide into forgetfulness, it will be there, ready to use[283]. It is not even odd that the same word can have both these meanings: one of the main characteristics of our experience of sense perception is the fact that it appears as something immediate and evident.

At this point, it becomes clear that what is at stake in this thought-experiment is something radically different from our normal experience. If, in fact, the beings that populate the second subsection are the beings that we are able to grasp immediately, then, in the terms of the divided line, the beings that we believe to be the most real of all, the ones seem to really be, are, in fact, ontologically degraded or subordinate to something else. As "images", their essence will reside somewhere else. As "images", they will point out towards where their essence resides. This could manifest itself in three different ways: 1. as a complete confusion between "image" and the thing in which said object's essence resides; 2. as an effective remission towards the "thing itself"; 3. as a hindered remission, accompanied by the acute awareness of that failure, and the consequent tension towards the thing itself.

[283] This particular notion of αἴσθησις is not a peculiarity of this passage of *Theaetetus*, or even of the *corpus Platonicum*. It is a perfectly ordinary use of the word. In ancient Greek, as in many other (including modern) languages, the vocabulary of sense perception is not starkly differentiated from the vocabulary of what we have earlier identified as νοητά. The English word "perception", and its correlate "perceive" are in many cases used to denote mental activities that do not entail sense perception; it is very usual to use the verb "to see" in the sense of "to understand". On this see especially OLIVEIRA, S., *Platão e o Cavalo de Pau: aspectos do problema da síntese e da constituição do acesso no* Teeteto, Cadernos – Centro de Estudos de Filosofia, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Porto, Fundação Eng. António de Almeida, 2015, 9ff.

In the first option, there would be no real manifestation as such – it would be a situation analogous to the most common dreamlike perspective we have already described. If we look carefully, we must realise that this is precisely the situation we are in, in what regards the beings that populate the second subsection, since we do not deal with these beings as if they were "images". What this suggests is that the beings we consider to be the most real, the ones we have immediate and direct access to, are, in fact, oneiric. The sunlight coming through the window, the sounds from the street outside, the printed piece of paper you are reading just now – all these are just a dream. What the divided line suggests is that the world we consider to be real, our world, what we would spontaneously identify as the "things themselves", are in fact a dream. The dreamlike perspective extends far beyond what we normally recognise as dreams. Even what we believe to be waking life can have a dreamlike character. In the Platonic conception, dreaming, ὀνειρώττειν, is not simply opposed to waking life. Dreaming is defined as taking mere images for the things they are images of[284]. It is a specific form of perspective, a perspective that, to use a mythological image, repeats over and over Ixion's mistake, taking a cloud as if it were Hera.

This signals a fundamental and decisive limitation in our normal perspective. This limitation does not have to do necessarily with the idea that the senses are deceiving and prone to mistakes, which could always be dismissed as merely occasional glitches in the context of an otherwise effective and adequate perspective. What is at stake in this possibility is something much more serious: that a perspective that does not go beyond the second subsection will not be able to give an adequate access even to the beings that correspond to the second subsection. The defects of πίστις are not occasional or accidental; they are constitutive. Πίστις is a defective mode of access in a way analogous to the defects of εἰκασία: it gives access to beings whose essence resides outside themselves, and, at the same time, is not able to give access to whatever that might be. If the image analogy is to be believed, the consequence of being retained in the second subsection is to be unable to have an adequate access to the beings of the second subsection.

This shows us an interesting feature of the divided line, already noticeable when we considered the relationship between the first and second subsections. The relationship

[284] 476c5: "τὸ ὀνειρώττειν ἆρα οὐ τόδε ἐστίν, ἐάντε ἐν ὕπνῳ τις ἐάντ᾽ ἐγρηγορὼς τὸ ὅμοιόν τῳ μὴ ὅμοιον ἀλλ᾽ αὐτὸ ἡγῆται εἶναι ᾧ ἔοικεν;"

between the different subsections of the line is not of mere juxtaposition. Rather, each subsection integrates and modifies the beings and modes of access included in the lower subsections and will, in turn, be also modified by the higher subsections. Without the higher subsections, each subsection will, in reality, be marked by defects and incompleteness. In a way, each subsection (with the possible exception of the fourth) is already more than it seems to be, but still less than it should be. It is more than it seems because it includes in itself a demand for something outside itself; but is also less than it should be because, on its own, each subsection will be incapable of fulfilling that demand.

A perspective retained in the second subsection is a perspective unable to fulfil its own demands. As we have seen in the case of first subsection, being retained can assume two different aspects: either this fact is entirely ignored, making each of us unable to recognise the insufficiencies of a perspective installed within the second subsection; or we can recognise the shortcomings of such mode of access in such a way that there is a tension towards overcoming them. In the first case, we would remain oblivious to any limitation of our perspective; the inefficiency of our perspective would be disguised as its opposite. In the second case, one would be aware of those limitations, and yearn to overcome them. The absence would be felt and would be a fundamental determination of this perspective. In a way, τὰ νοητά would be an essential component of a perspective retained in the second subsection – but a component that is essential because of its absence, as a want that is felt.

By assigning to the second subsection of the divided line the status of image, of a dreamlike perspective, Plato is putting forward a notion that is completely at odds with our normal experience. The perspective that we would normally identify as our own, the perspective that is naturally and spontaneously ours is said to be no more than an image, no more than a dream. This thesis destroys the cognitive status of this perspective. It is not the things themselves we have access to, but rather a mere image that has usurped the identity of the "thing itself", or a dream that we mistakenly take as waking life. Once the image is recognised as image, the mechanism of remission comes into play. There is a fundamental ambiguity at the heart of this conception of image: if, on the one hand, it is far away from the "thing itself", on the other hand, it puts us in contact with it. What makes the difference between an image as a factor of retention within a perspective that is far from being cognitive, and an image that can put us on the track of the thing itself is the presence or absence of the awareness of the image as image. When one becomes

aware that the image is just that – an image – and not the "thing itself", the image becomes the starting point of a tension towards the constitution of a cognitive perspective, a perspective that renders the "thing itself", which, at the moment, the image is the only notification of. But one is now aware that there is something else, the "thing itself", of which the image is but an image, and that is in the "thing itself" that the identity presented by the image resides. A perspective set in the second subsection becomes displaced when this happens, it has no means of sustaining itself and collapses. The loss of cognitive status requires a search, a hunt for the "things themselves" that are the correlate of what is now recognized as a mere image. The collapse of the perspective that corresponds to the second subsection demands the constitution of an alternative perspective, one that is an actual waking perspective, not a dreamlike one, one that accesses the "things themselves", not mere images.

It is in this context that the ὑποθέσεις come into play.

The failure of the normal perspective puts one on the hunt for something else: for a perspective that can render the "things themselves", not mere images. In the context of the divided line, this perspective is identified with what we might designate as "scientific" disciplines: geometry, mathematics, and similar. These are modes of access that, far from being spontaneous and immediately available, require search, inquiry, a revision and potential change of what is rendered in the perspective that corresponds to the second subsection. They are, in this sense, to use once again the Aristotelian formulation, παρὰ τὰς κοινὰς αἰσθήσεις[285]. The perspective that corresponds to the third subsection is presented as a perspective that goes beyond the normal perspective, and that is not subjected to the same limitations[286]. In the divided line, the ὑποθέσεις appear as the pillars

[285] *Metaphysics* A, 981b14.

[286] We should keep in mind that there are significant differences between the modern, spontaneous understanding of "science" and the Platonic understanding. In the Platonic understanding, there is a significant gap between the "scientific" point of view and the spontaneous point of view. "Science" goes beyond the normal and spontaneous point of view, and challenges and reveals it as defective and lacking in intelligibility. The introduction of "science" results in a significant revision of theses and a deepening in the understanding of the notions that make up our point of view. The way we usually understand the contributions of science to our understanding of reality differs significantly from this. In our modern understanding, there is no apparent conflict between our day-to-day spontaneous point of view and the point of view of sciences. Regardless of how unexpected, surprising and odd scientific facts might be, we tend to peacefully integrate them into our normal point of view, without any significant alteration to it. We may very well know that matter consists in moving atoms and the empty space between them, but that does not alter our normal perspective on the objects that surround us – and even ourselves as bodily entities. The relationship between scientific knowledge and our normal point of view is somewhat analogous to the relationship between the kinds of beneficial μανία mentioned in the previous speech and the normal point of view. Both scientific knowledge and the cognitive gains that result from those forms of μανία add to the

that support this perspective. They are unaffected by the crisis that leads to the disqualification of the normal perspective. The ὑποθέσεις might be theses that have resisted the debacle, that have survived the massive disqualification that was the result of the perspective that corresponds to the second subsection being dreamlike, or they might be theses that were adopted afterwards, during the process to constitute the new "scientific" perspective. Regardless of when and as a result of what they became part of one's perspective, they appear as elements insusceptible of being disqualified by the realisation that the kind of perspective that characterises the second subsection is dreamlike. As the bases of such disciplines as mathematics and geometry, they appear secure and able to sustain a perspective that cannot and will not be disqualified.

What the divided line once again does, however, is disqualify this perspective. The third subsection, like the first and the second, also only gives access to images. To be retained in the third subsection is to be stuck in a dream. Once again this puts us in an awkward situation. The perspective that corresponds to the third subsection is not, like the second subsection, an immediately evident perspective. It is not the bearer of an immediate and spontaneous mark of effectiveness. However, it carries the credibility that comes from it being the result of a search, and from having been established on the secure footing provided by the ὑποθέσεις. What Plato is stating is that even disciplines like mathematics or geometry, that result from systematic inquiry, are still found lacking – they do not give access to the "things themselves", only to images. In other words, the "scientific" perspective that corresponds to the third subsection of the divided line is still a dreamlike perspective.

The fragilities and defects of the third subsection of the divided line are presented in contrast with the fully cognitive nature of the fourth subsection. To use the terms we have found in the scale of book V, whereas the third subsection is still a deformalisation of the δοξαστόν, the fourth subsection corresponds to what is designated as γνωστόν. The third subsection still has the character of something intermediate, μεταξύ. Therefore, what we must ask ourselves is: in what way is the mode of access that corresponds to the third subsection, διάνοια, found lacking when compared with the truly cognitive mode of

cognitive patrimony without, however, changing it in any significant and radical way. The Platonic understanding, on the contrary, envisions the "sciences" as radical changes in perspective that undermine the theses that constitute the spontaneous point of view and force it to revise and change them.

access that corresponds to the fourth subsection, ἐπιστήμη or νόησις[287]? The way Plato shows the fragility of the perspective that corresponds to the third subsection is by impugning its very foundations: the ὑποθέσεις. The ὑποθέσεις are used by the different scientific disciplines as their fundamental bases. They are not subjected to inquiry themselves. They are the unmovable and certain foundations. It is precisely this point that Plato attacks. The ὑποθέσεις, who are supposed to be nuclei of real, actual knowledge, in fact display a dreamlike character: they are, in fact, mere images that are taken for the "things themselves".

However, both the third and the fourth subsections make use and are based upon ὑποθέσεις. And yet, while the latter is described as fully cognitive, the former puts in contact with mere images. So the difference between these two subsections does not hinge on the presence or absence of ὑποθέσεις. The difference has to do with the nature of the ὑποθέσεις that are present in each of the subsections, and also in the way they are employed as the fundamental pillars of our perspective. In the next few pages we will try to understand the distinction between the ὑποθέσεις used in each of these two subsections, and what kind of consequences it may have for the understanding of our perspective in relation to the divided line.

The distinction is first addressed in 510b4-9. The fundamental elements of this distinction reside in the different uses of ὑποθέσεις. The form of access that corresponds to the third subsection, διάνοια, uses them in conjunction with the beings that correspond to the second subsection of the line. Socrates, trying to explain what he means in this passage, establishes the contrast between the ὑποθέσεις employed by geometry and mathematics (510c1-511b2) and the ὑποθέσεις employed in dialectics (511b3-c2). This distinction is then summarised by Glaucon in 511c3-d5. The first kind of ὑποθέσεις is posited as the basis of a geometrical or mathematical reasoning. These ὑποθέσεις consist

[287] The term ἐπιστήμη to designate the mode of access peculiar to the fourth subsection is used in the recapitulation in book VII (533d4, 533d6, 533e8, 534a4). It is also used in Glaucon's recapitulation in 511c5 in the rather redundant and confusing (and maybe also confused) formulation: ἡ τοῦ διαλέγεσθαι ἐπιστήμη τοῦ ὄντος τε καὶ νοητοῦ. The term νόησις is also used mainly in the *Republic* VII recapitulation: 534a2, 534a3, 534a4 (twice). For most of the exposition in book VI, both these modes of access remain nameless. It is also used at the end of book VI: 511c5. The term διάνοια to designate the mode of access peculiar to the third subsection is first introduced in 511a1, and then used by Glaucon in 511c7 (see, however, SHOREY, P. (ed.), *Plato Republic Books 6-10*, Cambridge, Ma./London, Loeb Classical Library, 1935, *ad locum*). It is afterwards only used in the summary at the end of book VI (511d5) and in the recapitulation of book VII: 533e8, 534a5. Note, however, Glaucon's use of διανοούμενοι in 510d6. One should note as well the connection of νόησις and διάνοια with τὸ νοήτον.

in the fundamental assumptions necessary for the understanding of reality from a mathematical perspective[288]. The fundamental notions that constitute geometry and mathematics are not the object of investigation and questioning themselves, but are taken as a given and built upon. They are the bases upon which the mathematician builds his understanding of the beings he is trying to understand, and, in that respect, they seem to function as hypotheses in the "modern" sense we have identified above. These ὑποθέσεις

[288] On the possible relationship between ὑπόθεσις, ancient mathematics and ancient science in general, see: COHEN, H., *Platons Ideenlehre und die Mathematik*, Marburg, Elwert, 1879; NATORP, P., *Die logischen Grundlagen der exakten Wissenschaften*, Leipzig, Teubner, 1910, 12, 14f., 54, 338f., 345f.; HEATH, T., *A History of Greek Mathematics*, vol. 1, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1921, 131, 146ff.; RODIER, G., Les mathématiques et la dialectique dans le système de Platon, in: IDEM, *Études de philosophie grecque*, Paris, Vrin, 1926, 37-48; CORNFORD, F. M., Mathematics and Dialectic in the Republic VI-VII, *Mind* 41 (1932), 37-52, 172-190; FRITZ, K. von, Platon, Theaetet und die antike Mathematik, *Philologus* 87 (1932), 40-62, 136-178; DILLER, H., Hippokratische Medizin und attische Philosophie, *Hermes* 80 (1952), 385-409; ROBINSON (1953), 152ff.; WEDBER, A., *Plato's Philosophy of Mathematics*, Stockholm, Almquist & Wiksell, 1955, 103ff.; FRITZ, K. von, DIE APXAI in der griechischen Mathematik, *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 1 (1955), 3-103, especially 25, 29, 37; GULLEY, N. Greek Geometrical Analysis, *Phronesis* 3 (1958), 1-14; SZABÓ, A., Die Gundlagen in der frühgriechischen Mathematik, *Studi italiani di filologia classica* 30 (1958), 1-51; BECKER, O., Die archai in der griechischen Mathematik. Einige ergänzende Bemerkungen zum Aufsatz von K. von Fritz, *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 4 (1959), 210-226; LONGRIGG, J., Philosophy and Medicine, Some Early Interactions, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 67 (1963), 147-175; FRAJESE, A., *Platone e la matematica nel mondo antico*, Roma, Studium, 1963; HARE, R. M., Plato and the Mathematicians, in: Bambrough, R. (ed.), *New Essays on Plato and Aristotle*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965, 21ff.; TAYLOR, C. C., Plato and the Mathematicians: An Examination of Prof. Hare's Views, *Philolophical Quarterly* 17 (1967), 193-203; MAHONEY, M. S., Another Look at Greek Geometrical Analysis, *Archive for History of the Exact Sciences* 5 (1968/1969), 318-348; SZABÓ, A., *Anfänge der griechischen Mathematik*, München/Wien, Oldenburg, 1969, 299ff.; CAMBIANO, G., Il metodo ipotetico e le origini della sistemazione euclidea della geometria, *Rivista di Filosofia* 58 (1967), 115-149; MANSION, S., L'objet des mathématiques et l'objet de la dialectique selon Platon, *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 67 (1969), 365-388; WASSERSTEIN, A., Le rôle des hypothèses dans la médecine grecque, *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger* 162 (1972), 3-14; VICKERS, *op. cit.*; BEDU-ADDO, J. T., Mathematics, Dialectic and the Good in the Republic VI-VII, *Platon* 30 (1978), 117-127; BURNYEAT, M., Platonism and Mathematics: a Prelude, in: GRAESER, A. (ed.), *Mathematics and Metaphysics in Aristotle*. Akten des 10. Symposium Aristotelicum Sigriswil, 6-12. September 1984, Bern, Haupt, 1987, 21-240; MUELLER, I., On the Notion of a Mathematical Starting Point in Plato, Aristotle and Euclid, in: BOWEN, A. C. (ed.), *Science and Philosophy in Classical Greece*. Essays from a Conference "The Interaction of Science and Philosophy in Fifth and Fourth Century Greece" held by the Institute for Research in Classical Philosophy and Science in 1986, N.Y./London, Garland, 1991, 59-97; MUELLER, I., Mathematical Truth and Philosophical Method, in: KRAUT, R. (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Plato*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992, 170-199; HANKINSON, R. J., Doing without Hypotheses: The Nature of Ancient Medicine, in: LÓPEZ-FÉREZ, A. J. (ed.), *Tratados hipocráticos*. Estudios acerca de su contenido, forma y influencia: actas del VIIe Colloque International hippocratique (Madrid, 25-29 de septiembre de 1990), Madrid, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 1992, 55-67; MITTLESTRASS, J., Die Dialektik und ihre wissenschaftlichen Vorübungen (Buch VI 510b-511e und Buch VII 521c-539d), in: HÖFFE, O. (ed.), *Platon Politeia*, Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 1997, 229-249; CAMBIANO, G., La scrittura della dimostrazione in geometria, in: DETIENNE, M. (ed.), *Sapere e scrittura in Grecia*, Bari, Laterza, 1997, 121-150; BURNYEAT, M. F., Platon on Why Mathematics is Good for the Soul, in: Smiley, T. (ed.), *Mathematics and Necessity*. Essays in the History of Philosophy (Proceedings of the British Academy 103), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, 1-81; LAFRANCE, Y., La rationalité Platonicienne: matématiques et dialectique chez Platon, in: NARCY, M. (ed.), *Platon: L'amour du savoir*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2001, 13-48; CATTANEI, E., Las matemáticas en los libros centrales de la *República* de Platón, in: GUTIÉRREZ, R. (ed.), *Los similes de la República VI-VII de Platón*, Lima, Pontificia Univ. Católica del Perú, 2003, 53-71.

are the starting point that allows one to understand phenomena, not the object of inquiry themselves. The aim is to understand the scores of sensory phenomena to which these notions are applied, in other words, the beings of the second subsection. One might be using abstract notions, but what one is trying to understand is the same tree as in the previous subsection. The understanding of the tree will be different, when it is understood under geometrical and mathematical notions, but the knowledge one is striving for is knowledge of the tree, not of the geometrical and mathematical notions themselves. These are just stated and taken for granted. No account is given of what they really mean or on what grounds one has to take them as true. For the purposes of the arguments they serve as the bases for, ὑποθέσεις are treated as apodictic – "ὡς παντὶ φανερῶν" (510d1). They are functionally apodictic. These ὑποθέσεις are, in this sense, ἐπὶ τελευτήν: they lead towards the end of the reasoning, i.e., the phenomena one is trying to understand.

We must bear in mind when considering this issue that the ὑποθέσεις cannot be seen in isolation. A ὑπόθεσις works as a ὑπόθεσις precisely because it interferes with the identity of other determinations. As we have seen before, when we considered the "modern" notion of hypothesis, what is at stake is a network of theses, with different kinds of relationship with each other, and that influence and determine the identity and consequences of one another. The relationship of reciprocal interference between different determinations means that a perspective is not a collection of unrelated clusters of theses, but rather an integrated whole. Whatever affects one corner of this whole might have important and sometimes unexpected consequences in most, if not all, other parts of the network. In the case of the ὑποθέσεις, the impact will be even greater. The kind of relationship a ὑπόθεσις will have with other theses will be one of ascendency. Other theses will find their foundation on one or more ὑποθέσεις, without which they would entirely collapse. Anything that might impugn a ὑπόθεσις will contaminate the cognitive value of any of the theses that are based on them. This will be even more serious in those cases where the relationship between ὑπόθεσις and thesis is of a deductive nature. If a specific thesis was deduced from a ὑπόθεσις, or is further down in a longer and complex deductive chain, then any defect that might affect the original ὑπόθεσις will cause the deductive chain to collapse. Since the perspective is, as we have seen, an integrated network, this might have serious consequences and provoke a crisis that may affect the whole perspective.

Two kinds of defect can affect a ὑπόθεσις and eventually cause this kind of crisis.

One of the possible defects that might affect a ὑπόθεσις has already been mentioned when we considered the "modern" notion of hypothesis: modal fragility. A ὑπόθεσις, however, unlike a hypothesis in the "modern" sense, is taken as if it were apodictic. Whereas the "modern" hypothesis is used *as if* it were apodictic, in the case of the ὑποθέσεις of the third subsection, the possible modal fragility is out of sight. By this we mean that the thesis that is used as a ὑπόθεσις is seen as absolutely certain, admitting no alternative. It is because it admits no alternative that it can be used as a secure foundation for other theses. A ὑπόθεσις is, in this sense, "ὡς παντὶ φανερά", but in such a way that the "ὡς" loses its restrictive value. It becomes simply clear and obvious for everyone, and, as such, in no need of further scrutiny and insusceptible of any initiative to review it. This makes them all the more susceptible to error, an error that would potentially contaminate the whole perspective.

But there is another way in which the ὑποθέσεις of the third subsection are treated as if they were παντὶ φανεραί, clear or obvious to everyone. It does not have to do with the possibility of error, or even necessarily with lack of foundation, as understood in the context of a deductive chain. This is a modality of presumption of knowledge, οἴεσθαι εἰδέναι, in which what is at stake is the fact that one holds as true a thesis that is either wrong or is unsupported. But there is another modality of οἴεσθαι εἰδέναι at stake here, a modality that points out, in a way, to a much deeper problem. This is a problem that is at the heart of the *corpus platonicum*, a problem that is brought to the forefront of almost every Socratic questioning: the problem of intelligibility.

The pattern repeats itself, with variations, throughout the *corpus platonicum*: the interlocutor holds a specific thesis; he is interrogated by Socrates, who asks him a simple question. This simple question can be summarised thusly: τι ἐστίν; This question, however, is more than just a search for a definition. In fact, what the question and, especially, the attempted answers to the question reveal is the interlocutor's lack of understanding of what is at stake in the very notion they were employing. This contrasts with the certainty previously displayed by the interlocutor, who is now in dire straits to explain what previously seemed so obvious. What was before seen as εἰδέναι is now shown to have been a mere οἴεσθαι εἰδέναι; not, however, in the sense that there was a mistake in attribution, but rather because it becomes clear now that what was once

considered to be perfectly clear, is now revealed to be anything but that[289]. The problem is not one of error; it is not necessarily the case that the interlocutor was the bearer of a thesis that was wrong. The problem is rather that he was making use of a thesis, or employing fundamental notions he did not understand. To use the example Socrates uses in the divided line: the mathematician might use the notions of odd and even as the basic ὑποθέσεις of his discipline, but it is possible that he does not understand the notions of odd and even.

This is more than a circumscribed problem, which may only affect certain people in certain circumstances. It is not necessarily the case that the interlocutors are particularly ignorant or misinformed. The problem might be constitutive. It is possible that our spontaneous perspective is set up in such a way that it includes and employs as if they were παντὶ φανερά, at its very foundations, a set of notions and theses that we do not, as a rule, even understand. It is this constitutive problem that the Socratic questioning reveals, and is at the heart of the *corpus platonicum*. What the divided line shows is that the problems of intelligibility are not limited to the spontaneous perspective. Even the perspective of "scientific" disciplines, a perspective that is the result of a search, that has rejected the spontaneous perspective as being made up of images, even this kind of perspective might still be affected by a serious deficit of intelligibility. This deficit of intelligibility affects those theses and notions that, because they are the fundamental pillars of this kind of perspective, are not themselves the object of search and inquiry. These theses, the ὑποθέσεις, are taken for granted also in this peculiar sense. They are not just taken as apodictic, in spite of their possible modal fragility. They are also taken as intelligible, even when it is perfectly possible that they are anything but that.

The ὑποθέσεις that support the perspective of the third subsection are therefore affected by these two defects. Because they are not the object of inquiry themselves, because they are taken as perfectly secure foundations, they remain the blind spots of a perspective that claims for itself to be entirely cognitive.

The ὑποθέσεις that are characteristic of the fourth section are very different. They share with the ὑπόθεσις of the third subsection the role of bases upon which an argument

[289] This phrase and its variants (e.g. οἴεσθαι συνιέναι, δοκειν εἰδέναι) is repeatedly used in the *corpus Platonicum*, for example: *Apologia* 21b-22a, 23a-e, 29a-b; *Sophist* 229c, 230a-b, 231b, 243b9, 268a; *Laws* 732a, 863a; *Alcibiades Maior* 117b-118b; *Symposium* 204a; *Theaetetus* 210c; *Politicus* 302a-b; *Philebus* 48d-49b.

or an understanding can be built. But they differ from the first kind in a fundamental way: they are not taken for granted, and are themselves object of questioning and investigation. This movement of questioning and investigation is directed towards the ὑποθέσεις themselves. They are put to the test in order to ascertain if they can stand or not. The test has more than a functional purpose. It is the result of a strive towards truth, a desire to know and understand as much as possible. It is, in other words, a philosophical endeavour. As a result of this philosophical endeavour, the basic theses and notions that support this perspective will not be affected by the same deficit of intelligibility that is found in the third subsection. A truly "epistemic" perspective, a perspective that, to use the terms of the scale of book V, is characterised by a γνῶσις that puts in contact with τὸ ὄν, is a perspective that fully and clearly understands the ὑποθέσεις upon which it is based. These ὑποθέσεις are, in this sense, ἐπ' ἀρχὴν. This should not be confused with the designation, used later in the discussion of the divided line, of ὑποθέσεις ἀρχαί (511c7) – also used, albeit in a negative formulation, in 511b5. This refers to the ὑποθέσεις of the third subsection, which are used as ἀρχαί, sc. as absolute principles, not subjected to investigation. As such, they contrast with the τῷ ὄντι ὑποθέσεις (511b5) – literally ὑποθέσεις, in the sense of bases[290] upon which subsequent knowledge can be build, and which will be the object of a permanent process of revision. The ὑποθέσεις will therefore be treated as truly hypothetical, without losing sight of their modal fragility, provisional and tentative character, or of the possible problems regarding their intelligibility.

The distinction between these two kinds of ὑπόθεσις is further developed in Book VII of *Republic*, namely in 533b1-e2. Dialectics contrasts with other forms of inquiry by the fact that being is its object. It concerns itself with uncovering what things really are. The ontological drive that characterises dialectics is present in the other forms of inquiry in a limited way only. All forms of inquiry might strive towards the truth and are aimed

[290] Τῷ ὄντι ὑποθέσεις emphasises the literal meaning of the word ὑπόθεσις, formed by the prefix ὑπο- and θέσις, a verbal substantive of τιθήμι – a ὑπόθεσις is something that is placed under. The metaphor seems clear: a ὑπόθεσις is a basis upon which other theses find support. The ὑπόθεσις is placed *below* these subsequent theses. But ROBINSON (1953), 98-99, states that ὑπόθεσις has never had the sense of physical foundation. He further adds that the phrase τῷ ὄντι ὑποθέσεις is "a humorous pretence", that calls attention "to something the word might have been used to mean but has not". ROSENMEYER, T. G., Plato's Hypothesis and the Upward Path, *American Journal of Philology* 81 (1960), 393-407, especially 397ff., disagrees, stating that even if "there is no uncontested case of Plato using ὑπόθεσις in the sense of "foundation", there are examples provided by other authors. The clearest example is DEMOSTHENES II.10.5: ὥσπερ γὰρ οἰκίας, οἶμαι, καὶ πλοίου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν τοιούτων τὰ κάτωθεν ἰσχυρότατ' εἶναι δεῖ, οὕτω καὶ τῶν πράξεων τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ὑποθέσεις ἀληθεῖς καὶ δικαίας εἶναι προσήκει. The humorous character of the phrase does not detract from its role within the process alluded to in this passage.

at uncovering things as they really are, but each of them works on basic ontological outline, an overall and general recognition of what reality is. We have seen that this translates into a connection between forms of inquiry or modes of access to reality and specific kinds of being. The forms of inquiry that precede dialectics are retained in an erroneous recognition of reality that equates their own specific objects with being.

This misrecognition has serious consequences. The mere functionality of the functionally apodictic nature of the ὑποθέσεις is lost. The ὑποθέσεις are now seen as simply apodictic, which do not admit any alternative; they are also seen as theses that are entirely clear and obvious, as being entirely intelligible (510d1). This misrecognition constitutes an obstacle that stops the progression towards a perspective that can actually uncover things as they really are. In that sense, the perspective is retained or imprisoned in a limited kind of recognition of reality. The theses that constitute this recognition of reality are taken as true expressions of what really is. Therefore, there seems to be no need to put them to the test, to challenge or to revise them. The philosophical drive will feel satisfied, unless one's perspective is pushed upwards and led to put those theses to the test. These theses, the kind of ὑπόθεσις characteristic of disciplines like mathematics and geometry, are taken as true and intelligible regardless of the lack of justification for them being taken as such. This does not mean that the theses are necessarily false. They might or might not be. This rather means that they are taken as true without grounds, that there is no process of λόγον διδόναι[291].

[291] For the different shades of meaning of the phrase λόγον διδόναι (and variants), see VANCAMP, B., À propos de λόγον διδόναι, formule-clé de la dialectique Platonicienne, *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 83 (2005), 55-62. Vancamp identifies three different but related meanings in sources other than the *corpus Platonicum*, namely Herodotus, the attic orators and, to a lesser extent, Aristophanes, Sophocles and Euripides. The first is the "political" meaning of presenting one's accounts, justifying one's conduct in public office. Vancamp derives from this "technical" use the wider meaning of "justifier, fournir des explications sur un sujet donné" (58). The second meaning is to jointly discuss and deliberate, which Vancamp relates to the Socratic practice of examining arguments by a multiplicity of interlocutors. The third meaning is "réfléchir; se rendre compte (que)" (59). The first meaning seems to be the most prevalent in the *corpus Platonicum*, though Vancamp identifies several occurrences of this phrase where the first and second meanings are closely associated. See also: JEBB, R. (ed.), *Sophocles The Plays and Fragments* I *The Oedipus Tyrannus*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1883, ad 583; SHOREY, P. (ed.), *op. cit.*, 195 note; BOEDER, H., Der frühgriechische Wortgebrauch von Logos und Aletheia, *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 4 (1959), 82-112, IDEM, *Grund und Gegenwart als Frageziel der früh-griechischen Philosophie*. Den Haag, Nijhoff, 1962, 97; UNTERSTEINER, M., Studi Platonici, *Acme* 18(1965), 19-67; MARTEN, R., *Der Logos der Dialektik*. Eine Theorie zu Platons Sophistes, Berlin, de Gruyter, 1965, 30ff; KUCHARSKI, P., *Aspects de la speculation Platonicienne*, Paris, Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1971, 172f.; FRÄNKEL (1976), 423f.; HOROVITZ, T., *Vom Logos zur Analogie*, Zürich, Hans Rohr, 1978, 101ff.; LLOYD, G. E. R., *Magic, Reason and Experience*. Studies in the Development of Greek Science, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979, 252f.; DOVER, K. (ed.), *Plato Symposium*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1980, ad 189b9; WIELAND, W., *Platon und die Formen des Wissens*,

The dialectical form of inquiry, on the contrary, requires a process of λόγον διδόναι. Theses have to be justified, their grounds have to be found, their claims have to be put to the test. The ὑποθέσεις at stake in this form of inquiry are the object of a process of testing and revision. Their status is permanently at risk. The process consists in denying and destroying these ὑποθέσεις when no grounds are found to sustain them. By searching for these grounds, by trying to provide a justification of the theses, this process transforms each ὑπόθεσις of the first kind (i.e., the thesis upon which an argument or knowledge is based) into a step towards an ontological understanding. The ὑποθέσεις that were simply taken as true and were not themselves object of any kind of inquiry are, even when their truth claims are maintained throughout the dialectical process, turned into provisional and potentially revisable theses. One can therefore say that they are denied in two senses. All of them are denied as ὑποθέσεις that are assumed to be true without any kind of scrutiny. But some of them will also be denied in a second sense: by being shown to be false or insufficient.

The search for the "things themselves", ignited by the collapse of the second subsection, will lead to a perspective that still deals with images. One will wake up from the dream of the second subsection just to be once again prisoner of another dream. Those who are the bearers of this kind of perspective, according to Socrates, "ὀνειρώττουσι περὶ τὸ ὄν" (533b8), are dreaming of being. This new dream, like the previous one, will appear to be waking life. It will not be lived or experienced as a dream. But this new dream has a peculiar characteristic, when compared with the previous one. Whereas the dream of the second subsection was entirely sedentary, perfectly installed and apparently stable, the dream of the third subsection is characterised, from the onset, by inquiry, by search, by hunt. As we have seen, the third subsection emerges as an attempt to overcome the flaws of the second subsection. As such, it is the bearer of a philosophical urge, of a tension towards overcoming the limits and flaws of the second subsection – which, as we have also seen, presents itself as immediate, spontaneous and apparently obvious.

The perspective of the third subsection, a perspective that is, from its very origin, imbued in φιλοσοφεῖν, will, however, still be characterised as being a dream. The

Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982, 217, 240, 247, 305; SZAF, J., *Platons Begriff der Wahrheit*, Freiburg/München, Alber, 1998, 289, and CARVALHO (2007), 30-31, n27. The phrase λόγον διδόναι appears twice in the *Phaedrus* (270e3 and 277c3). None of these occurrences bear any of the meanings mentioned above.

perspective of the third subsection presents a peculiar mixture of φιλοσοφεῖν and ὀνειρώττειν. And yet, it will present itself as being integrally φιλοσοφεῖν, as having been successful in its efforts to produce a perspective that no longer deals with images. The dreamlike character of this perspective will be hidden – and it is precisely because it is hidden, that the ὀνειρώττειν will have primacy over the φιλοσοφεῖν. In spite of the effort to overcome the ὀνειρώττειν, the perspective of the third subsection, the "scientific" perspective, will be retained within it because of the very fact that the φιλοσοφεῖν it is the bearer of creates the illusion of having succeeded in reaching the "things themselves". It is because the perspective of the third subsection is incapable of recognizing the flaws at its very foundations, the ὑποθέσεις, that it is still a perspective that puts in contact with images, not with the "things themselves".

To overcome the limitations of the third subsection is to burst the dreamlike bubble in which that perspective is encapsulated. This will be to stop ὀνειρώττειν περὶ τὸ ὄν, and actually be put in contact with τὸ ὄν. If the third subsection is still a dream, then the transition to the fourth subsection, as the one which puts in contact with the "things themselves", not images, will be akin to waking up from a dream. However, the Platonic conception of ὀνειρώττειν does not make waking life the only opposite of dreaming. The definition of ὀνειρώττειν in *Republic* V makes this much clear: that the difference between dreaming and not dreaming is not the same as the difference between being asleep and being awake[292]. The difference between dreaming and not dreaming has to do with the kind of presentation the dream is a bearer of. To dream is to mistake an image for the "thing itself", αὐτό. This situation can be resolved by waking up, but it can also be resolved by something we have already mentioned when we dealt with the transitions between different subsections of the divided line: by becoming aware that the image is merely an image, not the thing itself. This is not akin to waking up, since one is still within the dream. But it is fundamentally different from the previous situation, since one is no longer prisoner of the illusion that the image is the "thing itself". This is a realisation that puts one in search of the "thing itself", the very thing that the image pretended to be, and towards which it points out. In the case of the transition from the third subsection to the fourth, it is therefore possible to be in an intermediate position: already aware of the flaws

[292] *Republic* V, 476c2ff.: "ὁ οὖν καλὰ μὲν πράγματα νομίζων, αὐτὸ δὲ κάλλος μήτε νομίζων μήτε, ἄν τις ἡγῆται ἐπὶ τὴν γνῶσιν αὐτοῦ, δυνάμενος ἕπεσθαι, ὄναρ ἢ ὕπαρ δοκεῖ σοι ζῆν; σκόπει δέ. τὸ ὀνειρώττειν ἆρα οὐ τόδε ἐστίν, ἐάντε ἐν ὕπνῳ τις ἐάντ᾽ ἐγρηγορὼς τὸ ὅμοιόν τῳ μὴ ὅμοιον ἀλλ᾽ αὐτὸ ἡγῆται εἶναι ᾧ ἔοικεν;"

of the ὑποθέσεις that support the "scientific" perspective, but not yet in possession of an integrally cognitive perspective. This intermediate position will be one of hunt and inquiry. In this inquiry the ὑποθέσεις will, as we have seen, play a fundamental role. But these ὑποθέσεις will not be simply taken as apodictic without scrutiny, or assumed to be intelligible. The ὑποθέσεις themselves would be objects of the φιλοσοφεῖν, not merely its instruments.

However, we should not conclude from this analysis that images only play a limiting role in the divided line. They are more than mere illusions set up to dupe us and to keep us retained away from a truly cognitive perspective. They create the illusion of being in contact with the "thing itself", but that illusion is the first notification we have of the "thing itself". The image only produces retention within a faulty perspective when there is ὀνειρώττειν, i.e., when the image is taken for the "thing itself". Once the ὀνειρώττειν is destroyed, once the image is recognised as a mere image, a tension towards the "thing itself" is produced. This is the first step towards the constitution of a truly cognitive perspective. If the image's weakness is that it is merely an image, i.e., that is essence, its identity is located outside itself, its strength is that, when seen as what it really is, a mere image, it puts in contact with the "thing itself". In a way, it shows the "thing itself", and, by doing that, produces a peculiar form of presence of what is absent. Without the ὀνειρώττειν, the image is the bearer of a promise and pushes one towards it.

The distinction between the third and fourth subsections, however, seems to be put in very limited terms. The kind of ὑποθέσεις that are at the heart of this matter seem to be limited to a very small number of very specific disciplines: mathematics and geometry. If that is the case, the third subsection corresponds to something very limited and its corresponding mode of access, διάνοια, would be the property of a very small group of human beings: those that dedicate their lives to the understanding of mathematics and geometry. The transition between the second and third subsections would therefore be characterised by a significant contraction: from a mode of access the aim of which is to show all animals, plants and products of human crafts, to a mode of access pertaining exclusively to mathematical and geometrical concepts and propositions. But these disciplines do not cover the universe of human knowledge. Mathematics and geometry are just two among a multiplicity of other disciplines. If the purpose of the divided line is to provide a relatively complete picture of the different modes of access to being, then the exclusion of all those other disciplines from the line is troubling. Where, in fact, would

disciplines such as physics and astronomy, such as biology and medicine, such as history and linguistics fit? One can argue that a few of these, perhaps, would better fit the second subsection, considering that their objects are natural beings, such as animals and plants, or the products of human skill, such as war and language. It is unclear, however, if the concepts and theses that compose these disciplines would actually have any place within the second subsection, considering how abstract, sophisticated and, to a very large extent, counter-intuitive they are. Furthermore, even mathematics and geometry are presented by Socrates as having an important connection to the beings of the second subsection – and yet they are set apart from these.

It is more likely that Socrates chose to mention mathematics and geometry as examples of something more general. One should not forget that Socrates first mentions mathematics and geometry as a way to illustrate his previous point to an understandably confused Glaucon (510b10ff.). Why he chose these specific disciplines as examples is perhaps not very important. It might be because these are the more abstract scientific disciplines, not applying to any specific beings that can be the object of the senses. More important than this, however, is the question of whether the statements regarding the nature, use and limitation of the mathematical and geometrical ὑποθέσεις are limited to these disciplines, or whether they can extend to other disciplines and perspectives. Any discipline and perspective that makes use of something similar to the ὑποθέσεις used by mathematics and geometry, and which might share the limitations assigned to these ὑποθέσεις, will fit within the borders of the third subsection. If we look at the general characteristics assigned to the ὑποθέσεις of mathematics and geometry, we find out something somewhat disturbing: most theses that compose our perspective share these characteristics.

The use of hypotheses in the "modern" sense to constitute a body of knowledge only seems to apply to a very limited form of acquisition of knowledge. In fact, it applies only to those forms of acquisition of knowledge that are normally associated with rational and scientific disciplines. They are active, self-aware, critical and in permanent state of revision. This does not describe in the slightest the usual mode of dealing with cognitive contents. First, the usual mode of acquiring knowledge is anything but active. Most cognitive content arrives in a passive way; the occasions when even the most curious human being takes the initiative to actively pursue any cognitive content are rare when compared with the flood of content one has to deal with every time one does something

as simple as opening one's eyes and recognize and deal with the objects around. Secondly, this process takes place silently, without one noticing it; one deals with cognitive content all the time, acquiring what seems to be new knowledge without even thinking much about that. Thirdly, the way the acquisition of new knowledge usually takes place does not entail any kind of rigorous and critical examination of its content and foundation. New theses tend to be adopted passively, without much scrutiny, based on plausibility or just blind belief. Most of the assets that constitute our cognitive estate were acquired in that way. Fourthly, the perspective tends to be lazy in what regards revision of acquired content. Whereas the "scientific" perspective requires constant revision, the spontaneous perspective only does any kind of revision in very sparse occasions. Even then, this revision is of very limited scope. A permanent state of revision is not a normal situation. There is a tendency towards cognitive inertia: an acquired cognitive content tends to stay as it is except in very exceptional circumstances.

A "scientific" perspective never comes first. It is always constituted after the spontaneous perspective and corresponds to a modification of it. The secondary nature of the "scientific" perspective means that it is not created *ex nihilo*. Not only is it a project of acquisition of further knowledge, it is also a project of revision of the cognitive contents one already possesses. It does not appear in a vacuum to constitute a thoroughly rational body of knowledge. It emerges from a very crowded space, already occupied by a myriad of spontaneous and "pre-scientific" theses. This means that before actively putting forward self-aware hypotheses, the rational, "scientific", perspective has to deal with another kind of hypotheses: the multitude of unexamined theses that constitute and provide the foundation for most of our cognitive patrimony.

The difference between hypothesis in the "modern" sense and the ὑποθέσεις of the third subsection of the divided line becomes clearer when seen under the light of these general characteristics of our perspective. The scientific and rational "modern" hypotheses are self-aware through and through: at the moment of being posited, but also throughout the whole investigation. Their modal fragility is a fundamental aspect of their validity as hypotheses, and it is the fact that they are susceptible to be revised that guarantees the intellectual honesty of the whole process. But what Socrates emphasises in the ὑποθέσεις of the third subsection of the divided line is something quite different. These ὑποθέσεις are explicitly posited, and, as such are similar to the hypotheses in the "modern" sense. But one loses track of both their modal fragility and their deficit of

intelligibility. They are taken for granted and do not become the object of any inquiry themselves. They become not only functionally apodictic, but also, as ὑποθέσεις, inexplicit. As theses of obvious validity, and supposed to be perfectly intelligible, they fade into the background, becoming blind spots. The fact that they lose their explicitly hypothetical character introduces a substantial degree of inertia into the perspective: these theses will not be changed or even revised; they will not even be looked at, except as the foundations for subsequent theses. Whatever lack of foundation they may have in what regards both its modal fragility and its lack of intelligibility will become invisible. As such, they will display characteristics similar to those we have identified in our spontaneous perspective. They will become, to a certain extent, hidden assumptions – and this is their main defect, which prevents these perspectives from becoming truly cognitive.

The answer to the question about where our perspective is located within the divided line can only be accurately answered by first stating that the question itself makes little sense. Our perspective cannot be accurately pinpointed, because it is too complex. It is composed of a multiplicity of concepts and theses, in complex relationships with each other. Our access to τὰ ὁρατά depends on our access to τὰ νοητά, since without τὰ νοητά whatever τὰ ὁρατά happens to be is incomprehensible. In that sense, our perspective can be seen as residing well within the third subsection. However, the third subsection itself is characterised by an incredible complexity – a complexity that is merely alluded to in the very simplified description Socrates provides us with. It cannot be limited to the disciplines Socrates explicitly mentions, but it extends to all other disciplines, and also includes all the notions and theses that constitute our perspective. In this sense, the two lower subsections are both imaginary, since we have no experience of them on their own terms. But all these notions and theses are only fully cognitive for a perspective located in the fourth subsection. Διάνοια is a failed ἐπιστήμη, or, to be more precise, διάνοια is a mode of access that aspires and tries to become ἐπιστήμη – and usually fails.

So can we say that our perspective is located in the third subsection, or the fourth? This last option can be excluded, since this would mean that we have a fully cognitive perspective, sc., a perspective that is completely effective, that has a clear perspective of being, with no intelligibility problems. But to say that our perspective is fully and definitely installed in the third subsection would also be a mistake. In fact, the mode of access that characterises the third subsection has a relationship to the fourth analogous to the one the second subsection has to the third. In other words, the third subsection is an

image of the fourth, with all the consequences we have already mentioned when we considered the first and second subsections. The third subsection already points towards the fourth and only makes sense as a transition towards the fourth. The perspectives that constitute the third subsection claim to render reality as it really is; they possess an intrinsic claim to their own effectiveness. This claim can only be justified inasmuch as two conditions are met: that they actually give access to things as they really are, viz. to τὰ ὄντα, but also that this is not merely accidental, but rather the result of a cognitive process, the understanding of consequences, implications and links of each concept and thesis that is the necessary condition of any λόγον διδόναι. This second condition is of fundamental importance, since what is at stake is not merely the factual cognitive content as something one might possess or not, but fundamentally the relationship with it. In a way, the notion of knowledge at stake here is not so much one that sees knowledge as a thing to be possessed, but rather as an experience to be lived. A fully cognitive perspective, viz. a perspective with full access to τὰ ὄντα, cannot be a perspective that, by some lucky accident, happens to hold all the correct opinions, but rather a perspective that is able to understand and justify them.

This notion of knowledge is very demanding: it demands nothing less than a full access to τὰ ὄντα with complete and absolute understanding. This is a demand the perspectives of the third subsection are incapable of fulfilling – but this is a demand that defines and determines them nonetheless. Similarly to the two previous subsections, the third subsection seems to be characterised by a tension between what it should and what it can do. It tries to reach beyond its grasp or, to use another metaphor probably more in tune with our time, it lives beyond its means. But this tension cannot be resolved by applying austerity to one's cognitive claims, in an attempt to adjust one's lifestyle to one's means. The truth is not the object of a whim or a desire that can be ignored or set aside; it is rather an intrinsic yearning that cannot be eliminated. Our perspective cannot afford to be thrifty. It can only be prodigal or infinitely wealthy. Since it is not infinitely wealthy, it has no choice but to be prodigal. As with the previous two subsections, the alternative is between a perspective that ignores that it lives beyond its means and one that is aware of its own limitations. The first will not strive to surpass its limitations and will remain convinced that it actually possesses infinite wealth; the second, however, knows that all that it enjoys is borrowed and all that it owns is debt. The imbalance between wealth and expenditure will not be solved by spending less, but rather by acquiring more.

We have seen so far that the use of the notion of ὑπόθεσις in the third subsection of the divided line disturbs what at first appeared to be a perfect correspondence between the "modern" notion of hypothesis and its ancient counterpart. This, of course, does not mean that, in many of its uses, ὑπόθεσις differs completely from the "modern" notion. In many instances, in fact, the correspondence is almost perfect: ὑπόθεσις is an explicit assumption, put forward in a tentative and provisional manner in the context of an investigation. But the notion we have found in the divided line is quite different: what may have begun as an explicit assumption becomes hidden, as it is taken for granted without λόγον διδόναι. The hypothetical nature of the ὑπόθεσις is replaced by a pseudo-apodictic nature. The ὑποθέσεις that we have found in the third subsection of the divided line have therefore lost their tentative nature.

But this is only part of the story. We have also found that the limitations attributed to the ὑποθέσεις used by mathematics and geometry are not exclusive to these and similar disciplines. In fact, the lack of λόγον διδόναι, the taking as apodictic hypothetical theses, and the deficit of intelligibility, are common enough occurrences in the normal perspective. Like the ὑποθέσεις of geometry and mathematics, they are ὑποθέσεις ἀρχαί, i.e., assumptions that have ascendency within the network of theses that compose the perspective, and which have a pseudo-apodictic nature and/or a deficit of intelligibility. But, unlike the ὑποθέσεις of geometry and mathematics, these ὑποθέσεις are not explicit at any moment, except perhaps when they are the object of retrospective examination. They are not explicitly and purposefully adopted, but are rather part of the perspective, as hidden assumptions. Functionally, they still work as ὑποθέσεις, since they provide the grounding for subsequent knowledge. But they are inexplicit, and, as such, not the object of any kind of discussion or attempt of λόγον διδόναι. They are experienced as apodictic and intelligible by default.

But we have identified yet another kind of ὑπόθεσις, the ὑποθέσεις Socrates calls τῷ ὄντι ὑποθέσεις. These ὑποθέσεις are the result of a process of mobilisation of the perspective, of an effort to identify the ὑποθέσεις in their hypothetical nature, and of eliminating that hypothetical nature through a process of λόγον διδόναι, on the one hand, rejecting the ones found to be groundless and adopting as apodictic those that are not, on the other hand, adopting ὑποθέσεις not affected by a deficit of intelligibility. Of these four types of ὑποθέσεις, only the first corresponds perfectly to the "modern" notion of hypothesis. Its ancient counterpart seems to be over-determined when compared to the

other meanings we have found in the divided line, having in common with them the fact that they all serve as the basis or grounding of other theses[293].

3. Κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα

So far we have purposefully downplayed the role of an important element of the divided line: the movement metaphor. This element, however, is perhaps one of the most relevant aspects of the divided line for the aims of our current study on the *Phaedrus*. The four subsections of the divided line are but snapshots of a dynamic process. We have already seen how difficult it is to locate our perspective in any of these subsections, due to its intrinsic complexity. But this is also difficult due to its mutability, to the fact that, albeit a relatively rare occurrence, our perspective is capable of being revised and changed. However, even if no change occurs, there is still an intrinsic element of movement in the economy of the divided line. We have seen above that in between each subsection there is a possible element of yearning at stake. The possible awareness of the radical and intrinsic incompleteness of each subsection – each of them characterised as the image of the subsection above – introduces this yearning. But how does this element translate into the movement metaphor? There is no necessary connection between yearning and motion. One can very easily conceive the yearning at stake here as a paralysed yearning, incapable of being fulfilled. But this is a paralysis that does not cancel the yearning itself: it remains as a tension towards movement, albeit frustrated.

The movement vocabulary and metaphors are used most insistently in the discussion of the third and fourth subsections[294]. Going up and down, advancing and retreating, jumping and leaping, all these images are used to explain the process of adopting, analysing and using ὑποθέσεις. The idea of movement is an intrinsic part of the third subsection, one of its essential components – and the distinction between the third and fourth subsections seems to hinge on this idea, to a great degree.

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[293] See SAYRE, K., *Plato's Analytical Method*, Chicago/London, University of Chicago Press, 1969, 13 n.12: "The word hypotithemi does not necessarily mean "to lay down *tentatively* or provisionally", as to hypothetize often means in English. A more accurate meaning in the present context is "to posit as the beginning of a discourse or thought"."

[294] The examples are numerous: οὐκ ἐπ' ἀρχὴν πορευομένη ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τελευτήν (510b5-6); μέθοδον (510b8; 510c5); διεξιόντες (510d2); ὁρμήσωσι (510d3); ἰοῦσαν (511a5); ἀνωτέρω ἐκβαίνειν (511a6); κάτω (511a7); ἅπτεται (511b4); ἐπιβάσεις (511b6); ὁρμάς (511b6); ἰών (511b7); ἀψάμενος (511b7); ἐπὶ τελευτὴν καταβαίνῃ (511b8); δι' αὐτῶν εἰς αὐτά, καὶ τελευτᾷ εἰς εἴδη (511c2); διὰ δὲ τὸ μὴ ἐπ' ἀρχὴν ἀνελθόντες σκοπεῖν ἀλλ' ἐξ ὑποθέσεων (511c8-d1); ἐπὶ τῷ ἀνωτάτω (511d8).

It is often noted that, whereas the first section of the divided line is explained in relation to the objects of the mode of access, the same is not the case with the second section. In fact, the modes of access described in the first and second subsections of the line are introduced in correlation to specific kinds of being: images and originals of those images respectively. But the explicit difference between the third and fourth subsections, several critics point out, is one of "method", not one of object[295]. This seems rather unproblematic, if we limit the scope of the ὑποθέσεις of the third subsection to mathematics, geometry and similar disciplines. But, when we realise that these are merely examples of a wider phenomenon, the simply "methodological" distinction between the third and fourth subsections becomes a problem. The limitations attributed to the mathematical and geometrical ὑποθέσεις are not exclusive to these disciplines, nor do they seem to derive from the specific characteristics of their method. In other words, to assume a starting-point and to lose sight of its hypothetical nature is a fault common to a large number of other disciplines and even perspectives not integrated within any specific discipline. It is rather a recurring feature of the human perspective. We can speak of a mathematical or geometrical "method", but it seems absurd to say the same about the normal, spontaneous perspective, when not submitted to the rules and constraints of a specific "scientific" and rational discipline.

The word "method" as a translation for μέθοδος is yet another example of a false friend. The word μέθοδος is not merely method, understood as an ordered series of steps directed towards achieving a specific goal. Μέθοδος is formed by adding the prefix μετα- to the noun ὁδός. Similarly to other compounds of the word ὁδός, it can be used to compensate for the lack of a verbal substantive for the verb ἰέναι. This means that μέθοδος is a *nomen actionis*, fulfilling the role of the inexistent verbal substantive of the verb μετιέναι. Therefore, μέθοδος means *pursuit*, the act of going after something that is trying to escape[296]. But to pursue something implies that one does not possess what is being

[295] See FERGUSON, *op. cit.*, 146; MOREAU, J., *La construction de l'idéalisme Platonicien*, Paris, Boivin, 1939, 328; CROSS and WOOZLEY, *op. cit.*, 205; MILLS, H. W., *op. cit.*, 152; BENSON, H., Plato's Philosophical method in the Republic: the Divided Line (510b-511d), in: MCPHERRAN, M. (ed.), *Plato's Republic: A critical guide*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 188-207, especially 188-190. Cf. CARVALHO (2007), 11ff.

[296] See VERRALL, W. (ed.), *The Seven against Thebes*, London, Mcmillan, 1887, ad 37; MÉRIDIER, L., Le mot ΜΕΘΟΔΟΣ chez Platon, *Revue des études grecques* 22 (1909), 234-240; DEBRUNNER, A., Das weibliche Geschlecht von ὁδός, *Indogermanische Forschungen* 48 (1930), 71; BECKER, O., *Das Bild des Weges und verwandte Vorstellungen im frühgriechischen Denken*, Berlin, Wiedmann, 1937, 18ff.; BURNET, J. (ed.), *Plato's Phaedo*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1911, ad 79e3, 97b6; SCHWYZER, E., *Syntaktische Archaismen des Attischen* (Abhandlungen der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

pursued; furthermore, it implies that the object of pursuit is escaping, going away. It implies an effort in order to capture or acquire something. The μέθοδος at stake here is a chase or hunting down of being. It might include, but does not require, the use of a "method" in the sense we are more familiar with. One might benefit in using such "method", since it might help achieve the goal, but even a clumsy μέθοδος is still a μέθοδος, a pursuit. The word μέθοδος, therefore, has two related but not completely similar meanings: 1. a pursuit or chasing, the act of hunting down something; 2. method in the "modern" sense. The movement metaphor is much more salient in the first meaning of the word, though it is not completely absent from the second one. But the picture changes significantly. The movement at stake in the third subsection is no longer *necessarily* the regular, steady, thoughtful, well-planned and relatively predictable movement associated with the use of a method – although this is still a possibility. It may well be the unpredictable, irregular, changing movement of a pursuit, a hunt: one can run, jump and crawl; one can stop, waiting for signs; one can advance, but can also retreat, go back, if one finds out one is in the wrong track. There might be no established itinerary. The pursuer goes wherever the tracks left by the prey leads him.

But it now becomes clear that the distinction we have mentioned above between the first and second sections misses an important point. The distinction is not between a section that focuses on object and one that focuses on method. Rather, it is a distinction between a perspective that displays no uncertainty regarding the identification of its object, and a perspective that has to *search* for its object. In the first case, what the object might be seems perfectly clear: for the first subsection, images; for the second subsection, the things themselves the images are images of. But, as we have seen, images are not really the object of the first subsection. In fact, the perspective of the first subsection deals with images as if they were the "thing itself", and it is only as such that that perspective is retained in the first subjection. This means that the object of the perspective, that which the perspective is directed at, is the "thing itself", not the image. The images, the shadows and reflections, are merely apparent objects, mistaken objects. And something similar can

Philosophisch-historische Klasse 1940, 7), Berlin, de Gruyter, 1940, 10ff.; CLASSEN, C. J., *Untersuchungen zu Platons Jagdbildern*, Berlin, Akademie-Verlag, 1960, 33-35, 39-40, 44ff.; DRIESCH, R., *Platons Wegbilder*: Untersuchungen zur Funktion der Wegbilder und -metaphern im Aufbau der Dialoge Platons, diss. Köln, 1967, 43f., 66f., 73, 86; SNELL, B., *Die Entdeckung des Geistes*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975, 221, 316 n18; IDEM, *Der Weg zum Denken un zur Warheit*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978, 85f.; CARVALHO (2007), 11ff.

be said of the perspective of the second subsection: what was before thought to be the thing itself is now a mere image – pointing towards something else. It is as if the object was lost. In reality, one becomes aware that it was never there. The new interrogative, inquisitive, hunting perspective is in search of the object, which is now known to be hidden. The true object can only be attained through a perspective that is cognitive, not through a perspective that is still only putting in contact with mere images. Since, as we have seen, the "scientific" perspective of the third subsection still only puts in contact with mere images, the only perspective that has access to its own object is the cognitive perspective of the fourth subsection. In fact, it becomes clear that all four subsections have one and the same object: τὸ ὄν. The distinction between the third and fourth subsections will therefore be one of μέθοδος, in both senses of the word. The fourth subsection comes into play when it becomes clear that the "scientific" perspective of the third subsection does not accomplish its own task. The prey has not been captured; the hunt has to go on. But the failure in capturing the prey has to do with the particular way in which one is hunting. One has to change the procedure, the method, in the "modern" sense.

The kind of movement that characterises the third subsection is the pursuit: to go after something that is hidden, subtracted, difficult to find. But this pursuit has a starting point: the ὑπόθεσις. The ὑποθέσεις themselves are described as bases and spring boards, as starting points for movement (511b5-6)[297]. Movement is a fundamental component. But it is a component that can be buried beneath a pile of false knowledge claims. That seems to be the meaning of the ὑποθέσεις that characterise mathematics and geometry, but this is in no way limited to these disciplines. By being taken for granted, those theses will not only not be set in motion, but they will also act as obstacles to the motion of our perspective towards a fully cognitive access to τὰ ὄντα. In a perspective described by using metaphors of movement, they constitute nuclei of immobility. But they are also stepping-stones, as all ὑποθέσεις are. Using the movement metaphor, they are the supports on which the perspective walks or climbs. But they might be wrongly positioned and lead one in the wrong track. Or, probably worse than that, make one foolishly believe that something is settled, when it is not.

[297] On the meaning of ἐπίβασις and ὁρμή in this passage, see CARVALHO (2007), 53-55. For ὑποθέσεις as bases or foundations, see p. 353, n. 290, above.

Once a specific thesis is accepted and installed in our perspective, it is very difficult for it to be dislodged or even to become a subject of inquiry. Theses tend to stay put, immobile. A reference to this phenomenon can be found in the already mentioned passage of *Republic* VII, 533b6-c3.

αἱ δὲ λοιπαί, ἃς τοῦ ὄντος τι ἔφαμεν ἐπιλαμβάνεσθαι, γεωμετρίας τε καὶ τὰς ταύτῃ ἑπομένας, ὁρῶμεν ὡς ὀνειρώττουσι μὲν περὶ τὸ ὄν, ὕπαρ δὲ ἀδύνατον αὐταῖς ἰδεῖν, **ἕως ἂν ὑποθέσεσι χρώμεναι ταύτας ἀκινήτους ἐῶσι, μὴ δυνάμεναι λόγον διδόναι αὐτῶν**.

In this passage, geometry and related kinds of knowledge are said to have a specific relation to τὸ ὄν. They somewhat touch upon it, with the emphasis put on the limited nature of this relation. The kind of vision of τὸ ὄν at stake is compared with the vision of a dream. Waking vision is said to be impossible, as long as these forms of knowledge employ ὑποθέσεις that are left undisturbed and they are not able to give an account of them. The ὑποθέσεις that characterise the peculiar perspective that presides over these kinds of knowledge are ἀκίνητοι – unmoved, undisturbed, and immobile. The use of this term is not innocent. In Greek, κινεῖν can mean to move or make something move, but also to disturb. The use of κινεῖν in the context of an argument or discussion, as, for example, in the phrase κινεῖν τὸν λόγον, can be found not only in several Platonic dialogues, but also in a few other contemporary sources[298]. Going through an argument, stirring up a discussion or presenting an objection are actions that can be expressed through phrases that use the verb κινεῖν. The mobilisation of theses is a fundamental feature of philosophical discussion. But what this passage shows is that, even at the sophisticated level of geometry, the lack of mobilisation persists.

The word chosen to express this lack of mobilisation is an allusion to the proverbial expression μὴ κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα, which can be found in several passages of the *corpus platonicum*[299]. In this context, the adjective ἀκίνητος expresses more than the mere fact that something is immobile, or that it is fixed or stable, i.e., that it is not moving, or even that it cannot be moved. In fact, the adjective also has a gerundive value: it indicates an obligation, that something has to be done. In this case, it means that

[298] PLATO, *Republic* 387b, 450a8, 503a6; *Philebus*, 15d-e: the description of the young man excited about the new argument. See also: XENOPHON, *Memorabilia* IV, 2.2: ὁ Σωκράτης βουλόμενος κινεῖν τὸν Εὐθύδημον; ARISTOPHANES, *Nubes*, 743-745.

[299] *Laws*, 684e1, 843a1, 913b9; *Theatetus*, 181b1: *Scholium ad Theatetum, ad locum*. *Philebus*, 15c9. See also DEMOCRITUS, DK 142B.

something is not to be moved, should not be moved, or, in other words, that it should remain as it is[300]. By extension, it can refer to the inviolable character of laws, or even to a subject that should not be broached. The gerundive value of the adjective makes this proverb a warning: do not disturb what should not be disturbed; do not change what should not be changed. It seems to be in this sense that it is used in the *Laws*: as an exhortation against changing legislation or, in 843a1, against moving the limits between lands. When used in the context of a discussion, it reads as a hint to the amount of disturbance this kind of mobilisation can create. The allusion to this proverbial expression in this context is not without irony. Being an exhortation to avoid disturbing what should remain undisturbed, it seems to encourage one to stay put, not to move, to be quiet and content.

Κινεῖν is intrinsically ambiguous, especially in what relates to knowledge and knowledge claims[301]. Movement can be disorderly and unpredictable; knowledge requires stability. An ever moving and changing knowledge would be no knowledge at all. An effective mode of access τὸ ὄν cannot be ever changing and unpredictable, because τὸ ὄν is not conceived as being ever changing and unpredictable. In the *corpus platonicum*, the instability of knowledge claims, a trait shared by many of Socrates' interlocutors, is often described by using the term πλανᾶσθαι, to wander or to stray[302]. This has an invariably negative connotation: the interlocutors' opinions cannot keep to one position, but rather move about, changing as Socrates puts them to the test. The wandering nature of their opinions contrasts starkly with the apparent steadfastness with which they are held prior to Socratic questioning. This πλανᾶσθαι shows that the knowledge claimed by the interlocutor was not firm, that it can change and move. The propositions defended by the interlocutors are wandering as they are held only because there is nothing that makes them move. Their firmness is merely apparent, which is the result of the lack of challenge. Once challenged, they move easily, revealing the basis upon which they stood was anything but firm. In this sense, μὴ κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα is a warning Socrates does not

[300] See CARVALHO, M. J., Μέθοδος e ὑπόθεσις – o problema do pressuposto na fundação platónica da ciência, in: FERRER, D. (ed.), *Método e Métodos do Pensamento Filosófico*, Coimbra, Imprensa da Universidade, 2007, 9-69, especially 58ff.

[301] On the ambiguous nature of κινεῖν in the *corpus Platonicum*, see PENDER, E., Plato's Moving Logos, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 45 (1999), 75-107.

[302] See, e.g., *Hippias Maior* 304c2; *Hippias Minor* 372d8, 376c2, 376c3, 376c4; *Laws* 655c3; *Lysis* 213e3; *Parmenides* 135e2; *Phaedo* 79c7, 79d5; *Phaedrus* 263b5, 263b9; *Politicus* 263a7, 263a8; *Protagoras* 356d5; *Republic* 479d9, 484b6; *Sophist* 330b5, 245e5.

normally follow. It seems rather that κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα is Socrates' favourite activity, even his life's mission. But the result of this κινεῖν has a strong negative connotation. It is a sign that the knowledge claim is unfounded, that the interlocutor does not really know, but rather only thinks he knows. True knowledge would not be susceptible to this wandering movement.

Immobility is the desired outcome. But there is a fundamental difference between what we could designate as *de facto* and *de iure* immobility. A thesis being *de facto* immobile might only indicate that it has never been the object of a serious challenge to its truth claim, foundation and intelligibility. It remains the same because nothing has made it move. The tendency towards inertia is strong and a thesis not firmly established might stay put for an indeterminate time simply by default. The apparent fixed nature of the theses is an illusion based upon the wrong (and usually silent) conviction that one is in possession of knowledge. This phenomenon, referred to in the *corpus platonicum* as οἴεσθαι εἰδέναι and similar expressions, constitutes a fundamental aspect of the perspective. One finds no need to enquire, because one is already sure one knows. This need not even be an explicit conviction; it can be entirely silent, experienced solely by the absence of any interrogative strive regarding a specific matter. The silent οἴεσθαι εἰδέναι is only recognised retrospectively, either because the silent conviction is shattered, or simply because the relationship with the thesis is made explicit as a result of questioning. The real desired outcome is the establishment of theses that are *de iure* immobile, i.e., that are able to resist questioning.

Putting a thesis in motion is both a test and part of the process to achieve this goal. It tests the theses that are already occupying one's perspective. But, by putting them in motion, by showing that they do not comply with the necessary requirements, the operation of κινεῖν makes room for the adoption of alternative theses. By dislodging the inappropriate theses, the process of κινεῖν knocks the perspective out of its complacent inertia. It provokes confusion and triggers a feeling of urgency directed at the uncovering of the truth regarding the issue at stake, of finding a replacement for the lost thesis.

But even in such circumstances their tendency is towards inertia. To make one's perspective move is not an easy task, and might have a variety of outcomes. The ὑποθέσεις are rooted in our perspective in different degrees. By this we mean that some will be more deeply embedded, and therefore more prone to resist mobilisation, than

others. The ὑποθέσεις also vary in how many theses they are the foundation of. By this we mean that some ὑποθέσεις will be more fundamental than other, i.e., will serve as the foundation and support for a wider number of theses. These two factors are commonly interrelated: the more theses a ὑπόθεσις sustains, the more deeply embedded it will be. Such a ὑπόθεσις will not only be harder to mobilise, but also any mobilisation that might occur will potential have a more catastrophic effect. To mobilise a ὑπόθεσις that sustains a significant multiplicity of theses, perhaps each of them sustaining a number of other theses, and so forth, will potentially constitute a radical modification in one's perspective. But the more radical the effects, the least likely it is the mobilisation will occur. Human perspective tends towards inertia, and it is usually only in extraordinary circumstances that such a catastrophic mobilisation may occur.

The perspective's natural tendency towards inertia is so prevalent that it can even affect scientific disciplines. Inquiry and revision is secondary to our nature. It is something that has to be provoked and that will subside if not continually stimulated. Even when there is some kind of mobilization of our point view, for example, through philosophical inquiry, the tendency is to leave something behind. Because the complex of theses that constitute our cognitive patrimony is usually adopted without much or any scrutiny, we tend to overlook their consequences and their connection with each other. Any kind of revision has to go piece-by-piece, thesis-by-thesis. It is possible, therefore, to examine and revise even a substantial amount of theses while leaving behind some unrevised ones. These are what we could call ἀκίνητα: theses that resist to the mobilization of our perspective, even in circumstances where that mobilization is stronger than usual. Even the perspective of a philosopher, in spite of the intense mobilization that corresponds to the philosophical project, can retain important elements of ἀκίνητον. But the tendency of philosophical inquiry is to search for these unmoved elements and submit them to scrutiny. This mobilization of the immobile is a fundamental aspect of platonic project. The aim is a complete mobilization towards revision and the complete enlightenment of our perspective. No stone should be left unturned, no thesis left unchecked, no assumption left unchallenged.

4. Ὑπόθεσις and κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα in the *Phaedrus*

In our cursory discussion of the use of the term ὑπόθεσις in *Republic* we were able

to identify a notion that is characterised by being less determined and more general than its "modern" counterpart. This notion of ὑπόθεσις can be reduced to a core: a ὑπόθεσις is a thesis that is used as a basis or grounding for another thesis. This fundamental element of the notion of ὑπόθεσις is shared with the "modern" notion and is seen throughout all the uses of ὑπόθεσις we have identified in the analogy of the divided line. Reduced to its bare bones, it constitutes a formal notion of ὑπόθεσις, which can be extrapolated from its context within the divided line. This formal notion is neutral regarding several of the determinations that are included in the "modern" notion of hypothesis. Ὑπόθεσις can be explicit or inexplicit; it can be tentative or can be functionally apodictic; it can be purposefully put forward or it can be a spontaneous element of the perspective. The most common ὑποθέσεις seem, however, to exhibit characteristics very different from the "modern" notion of hypothesis: they are spontaneous, inexplicit and functionally apodictic. These ὑποθέσεις only become explicit when retrospectively brought to thematic consideration. In most cases, they remain inexplicit. It is this kind of ὑποθέσεις that we will find in the speeches of the *Phaedrus*: inexplicit ὑποθέσεις that, in spite of, or perhaps even because of their inexplicit nature, shape and determine the perspectives on ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν that constitute the erotic speeches.

But there is another aspect of the notion of ὑπόθεσις – an aspect that we cannot neglect and that will play a fundamental role in our interpretation of the *Phaedrus*. As we have seen, at the heart of a ὑπόθεσις resides an instance of οἴεσθαι εἰδέναι. By this we mean that a ὑπόθεσις is more than just a link in a deductive chain, a foundation upon which other theses find support. Rather, a ὑπόθεσις is the bearer of a truth claim. Like any thesis, a ὑπόθεσις presents a statement about reality, a statement that is presented both *as true* and *as intelligible.* This truth claim can assume more than one form: it can be explicit and understood as such, or it can be silent, implicit, merely assumed. In most cases, it is left to stand, not necessarily on its own merits, but rather because it goes unchallenged. In other words, a ὑπόθεσις is an οἴεσθαι εἰδέναι that is presented as if it were simply εἰδέναι. It is, so to say, a form of "pseudo-knowledge": knowledge that may lack foundation, or be inaccurately taken as apodictic, or even lack intelligibility – or all three at the same time. And yet this "pseudo-knowledge" is not only taken as knowledge, but is also used as the foundation and support for other theses. This translates into a common tendency of our perspective: the appearance of blind spots.

These blind spots, when considered in the context of a process of mobilisation of

our perspective, can be understood as moments of ἀκίνητον. They resist mobilisation, they stay put when there is an attempt to shed light on the blind spots, or to make the immobile elements of our perspective move. It becomes clear, then, that ὑπόθεσις, more than a moment in a deductive chain, designates a blind spot or a dead angle in our perspective. Regardless of these being called "ὑποθέσεις" or not, they populate the *corpus platonicum*. In fact, the presence of blind spots or dead angles, that are afterwards overcome and revealed as such, is a fundamental mechanism used throughout the *corpus*. The matter at hand is considered and assessed; what results of this assessment will reveal, by contrast, the blind spots that were previously affecting one's perspective. The perspective will be able to overcome these blind spots, to be freed from their constraints. It is in hindsight that the thesis or notion that have been modified by subsequent developments is revealed to have been a ὑπόθεσις. The word "ὑπόθεσις" might not be used, but it is clear that ὑπόθεσις is an operational concept regularly used throughout the *corpus platonicum*. It is a concept that is used time and again, albeit anonymously, without being the object of explicit analysis. The only moment in which this concept is analysed explicitly are the passages of *Republic* we have discussed in this chapter. Elsewhere in the *corpus*, this concept operates silently and anonymously – illustrating our perspective's natural tendency towards inertia.

It is, however, in the overcoming of inertia that the ὑποθέσεις are revealed – in hindsight. One needs to free oneself from a ὑπόθεσις in order to recognise it as such. Before that, the ὑποθέσεις remain in place, either implicitly or explicitly, as the foundations of one's perspective. Looking back to what one has been able to overcome, one realises that the ὑποθέσεις operate in two different ways. We will start with the simpler of the two. This first modality is, so to speak, linear. Thesis A is held as true and intelligible, in an implicit way. But the mobilisation of one's perspective now reveals that thesis A was merely a ὑπόθεσις, a blind spot in one's perspective. This has now been overcome, the ὑπόθεσις having been replaced by a thesis apparently without the same limitations. This, of course, does not exclude the possibility of subsequent mobilisations revealing that even this new thesis is actually but a ὑπόθεσις, replacing it with another thesis, and so forth.

The other modality is more complex. The mobilisation of our perspective may reveal that a multiplicity of opposing or incongruent theses are dependent on another inexplicit thesis. In other words, one finds a ὑπόθεσις that is common to theses that were

deemed to be in opposition to each other. One finds a hitherto unexpected connection between two opposing perspectives. By revealing that these theses share a common ὑπόθεσις and by showing that that ὑπόθεσις admits mobilisation, it becomes clear that the realm of possibilities is vaster than the previous opposition suggested. This opens up the possibility of a different perspective, a perspective in which the newly found ὑπόθεσις is replaced by a different thesis. This modality of ὑπόθεσις is located deeper than the linear one. This is not just a matter of finding that the endorsement of a specific thesis actually constituted a blind spot in one's perspective – a blind spot that is then overcome. Rather, in this more complex modality, a ὑπόθεσις is found to be the common root, the shared foundation of opposing conceptions. The opposition is revealed to not be as radical as once thought. Therefore, one finds that those opposing conceptions do not exhaust the realm of possibility, since their own foundation, the newly found ὑπόθεσις, also admits alternative. This opens up new possibilities of revision that may lead to further significant gains in perspective.

In the context of the *corpus platonicum* in general, and the *Phaedrus* in particular, what results from this mobilisation, in whatever modality, is the definition of an itinerary of κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα. We are able to follow how different theses and conceptions are questioned, revised and changed, revealing in hindsight their character as blind spots. But something else also emerges from the mobilisation efforts found in the *corpus*: a pattern. It becomes clear that the presence of ὑποθέσεις and their subsequent mobilisation is far from being an isolated or occasional occurrence in the *corpus*. In fact, it is to be found throughout the *corpus*, to the point of it becoming one of its essential features. In other words, the presence of ὑποθέσεις and their subsequent revision forms a pattern, which extends beyond the mere delineation of an itinerary. By this we mean that the fact that this is a pattern within the *corpus* strongly suggests the possibility of other moments of ὑπόθεσις and potential κινεῖν beyond the ones explicitly shown. The fact that one's perspective is then somewhat settled, that the process of κινεῖν seems to cease at a certain point does not necessarily mean that there is no more κινεῖν to be had, no more ὑποθέσεις to be revised. Quite the contrary: the fact that this kind of pattern emerges suggests that this is a constitutive feature of the *corpus platonicum*, or, to go even further, that this is a fundamental characteristic of the Platonic philosophical project. It suggests that the *corpus platonicum* is marked by a tendency towards the suppression of blind spots, towards κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα that goes against the natural human tendency towards inertia.

In this sense, it encourages each reader to carry on this task, even and especially when, in the course of the dialogues, matters appear to have been settled. In other words, the *corpus platonicum* encourages each and every one of us to fight against our tendency towards inertia, to mobilise our perspective and to shed light into the blind spots that surely subsist.

It is in light of this general exhortation towards the suppression of ὑποθέσεις, towards turning οἴεσθαι εἰδέναι into actual εἰδέναι, that we must read the *Phaedrus* and attend to its general structure. According to the reading proposed in this study, the speeches of the *Phaedrus* can be understood as a sequence of re-examination of the ὑποθέσεις left behind by the previous speeches. This constitutes the basis of our interpretation of the connection between the erotic speeches of the *Phaedrus*. The speeches of the *Phaedrus* consist of a series of progressive revisions of a complex of theses regarding ἔρως and μανία. Many of those theses correspond to ὑποθέσεις ἀκίνητοι: theses that remain unmoved in spite of a mobilisation of the perspective, that may subsist in spite of the revising effort of the speeches. The movement from speech to speech corresponds to a progressive revision of ὑποθέσεις.

This, however, has a double effect. On the one hand, as the revision process goes on, more and more notions are brought to light and made clearer, i.e., they cease to be ὑποθέσεις. On the other hand, the revision process reveals more and more remaining ὑποθέσεις in need of revision and clarification. The revision goes forward, but it also goes deeper, as it reveals that, under the surface of all the explicit notions, lies a depth of implicit notions and theses that remain untouched. What we have in the end is a scale or ascending spiral of progressive revision. In this series of revisions, both modalities of κινεῖν mentioned above occur: the simpler one, where a thesis is replaced by another and revealed to have been a ὑπόθεσις, a blind spot, but also the more complex one, where two apparently opposing views are revealed to share a ὑπόθεσις, thereby opening up more possibilities.

The starting point is not, however, as one would suppose, Lysias' speech. Lysias' speech is already a moment of revision, namely, of the official discourse regarding παιδεραστία. Also, it is not clear that the second part of palinode corresponds to the definitive truth about μανία and ἔρως. It is quite possible, even likely, that in the palinode subsist ἀκίνητα, which might be object a subsequent κινεῖν, not least of all due to the pattern of mobilisation we have identified as fundamental feature of the *corpus*

platonicum. In this sense, the movements operated by the series of speeches do not start *ex nihilo*, or from a *fundamentum inconcussum*. They start from commonly held beliefs, in some respects, and from the already rather elaborate set of ideas that constitute ancient pederasty, in other respects. In a process of progressive revision, the end result can be (and in this case, most certainly is) very different from the starting point. But the analysis of ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν does not finish with the end of the palinode: it is open-ended and admits the possibility of further revision and even substantial change. The second part of the palinode may be a revolution, but it is only so because the overall Platonic philosophical project is based on a permanent and progressive setting into motion of theses that would otherwise stay still – and remain either groundless or even wrong.

4.1. Lysias' speech as a revision of the ὑποθέσεις of παιδεραστία's official speech

Lysias employs several τόποι concerning παιδεραστία – but with a twist. This twist, or, to be more precise, series of twists, can be considered attempts to re-examine and revise some ὑποθέσεις present in the set of ideas that constitute the official discourse of παιδεραστία.

Παιδερατία is a form of erotic relationship that does not entail equality between partners. One of the partners is a grown man; the other partner, a boy still developing into manhood. This inequality is compounded by the fact that the erotic attachment is unilateral: only the older partner is affected by ἔρως; the younger partner is the object of erotic desire. What the ἐρώμενος brings to this arrangement is his beauty and charms; what the ἐραστής brings, and what motivates the ἐρώμενος to yield to his advances, is the ἐραστής' knowledge and experience. Through his connection to the ἐραστής, the ἐρώμενος will be introduced into all the knowledge needed to become a full citizen. This implies that the ἐραστής is qualified to provide him with the education needed for that purpose. But we should not look at this as some sort of commercial exchange, sc. sex for knowledge. That is not the essence of παιδεραστία, at least according to its apologists. The ἐρώμενος yields to the ἐραστής out of affection, φιλία. The ἐραστής, because he loves and cares for the ἐρώμενος, tries to be as good as possible towards him. He accomplishes that by providing him with what his necessary for him to become a full man, a citizen. The fact that this is a free exchange of gifts defines this kind of relationship. It removes, at least in theory, any hint of mercenary motivation. The ἐραστής loves the ἐρώμενος and

wants to give him as much as possible; the ἐρώμενος is affectionate towards the ἐραστής and freely yields to his sexual advances, although he himself does not feel any kind of sexual attraction towards the ἐραστής.

Παιδεραστία can itself be seen as a revision of the traditional conception of ἔρως as a destructive force. In this case, we are dealing with a radical revision. Ἔρως is no longer the ferocious tyrant that wrecks one's life. Ἔρως is now a positive, beneficial force that drives a man towards a beautiful youth and motivates him to do as much good as possible to him. Παιδεραστία is a relationship characterized by εὔνοια. The idea of ἔρως as tyrant is still present inasmuch as it is still considered to be an irresistible force. But it is a force that can be applied in a way that is beneficial to both parties involved. The ἐραστής may still use the traditional erotic rhetoric of overwhelming desire; but he does it in a way that shows that what he truly wants is the good of the ἐρώμενος. This removes the destructive madness of love out of the equation. The destructiveness of ἔρως gives way to its upbuilding effects. In other words, where the "traditional" conception of ἔρως emphasizes violence and destruction, παιδεραστία emphasizes εὔνοια.

Lysias' speech, on the other hand, revises this fundamental ὑπόθεσις of ancient παιδεραστία: the connection between εὔνοια and ἔρως. Lysias severs the fundamental connection between εὔνοια and ἔρως that constitutes the very essence of παιδεραστία as an acceptable form of erotic attachment. In a way, Lysias reverses the innovation of παιδεραστία in connecting ἔρως and εὔνοια, to a more "traditional" view. The modifications introduced by Lysias' speech put, on one side, φιλία, personified by the non-lover, on the other side, the madness of ἔρως, personified by the lover. On the one side, he presents a relationship that will be mutually beneficial, since it excludes the naturally asymmetrical and unidirectional ἔρως; on the other side, a relationship that will ruin both parties, since it is defined by the presence of the destructive ἔρως. By doing this, Lysias shows the fragility of παιδεραστία's mix of εὔνοια and ἔρως. There is nothing in ἔρως, according to the traditional conception, that implies or requires the presence of εὔνοια. There is actually a lot that might be seen as excluding it altogether. It is this aspect of the traditional conception of ἔρως that Lysias stresses, while attributing all the positive components of the pederastic understanding of ἔρως to a form of relationship that excludes the passionate attachment that is characteristic of ἔρως. But Lysias maintains that some degree of affection, φιλία, is a desirable feature of any relationship, even if not of an erotic nature *stricto sensu.* With the kind of φιλία that the non-lover proposes to the

boy, Lysias shows how the practical aspects of παιδεραστία can be achieved without the presence of ἔρως. By doing this, Lysias presents an alternative to παιδεραστία, which has the virtue of apparently including all the positive traits of παιδεραστία without any of its flaws.

However, one should bear in mind that the proposed relationship between non-lover and boy could be characterized as commercial or mercenary, as an exchange of goods and services, even if it does not necessarily exclude the presence of some kind of affection or goodwill between parties. In fact, Lysias is quite insistent on the presence of φιλία and its superiority over ἔρως (232b2-c3, 233a1-4, 233b6-c6). One could actually interpret the exchange of favours as the visible sign of φιλία, not as its substance – and understand the attitude of the non-lover towards the boy as one of εὔνοια. However, the notion of εὔνοια implies a goodwill towards others, a goodwill that does not expect retribution, but that is given *gratis*. In this respect, εὔνοια is very much at odds with the kind of φιλία proposed by Lysias' non-lover, which can only exist when there is some kind of direct benefit to both parties. In fact, the ἐραστής is severely criticized in Lysias' speech not only because of the deleterious effects he has in the ἐρώμενος' life, but because he is incapable of acting according to his own self-interest. Εὔνοια, which consists in putting aside one's self-interest in favour of the affection one has towards others, would, regardless of its practical effects, be incomprehensible to the perspective endorsed by Lysias' speech.

In this regard, Lysias' speech attacks a ὑπόθεσις that is not only part of the apologetic discourse of παιδεραστία, but also of others ways of understanding the erotic phenomenon – and other forms of social interaction as well. In fact, the model for interpersonal relationships proposed by Lysias' non-lover relies so heavily on the idea of self-interest and mutual benefit that εὔνοια seems to play very little part in it. Other forms of φιλία, which will, in many cases, be understood as including εὔνοια as an important and even fundamental component, seem to be reduced to mere displays of self-interested calculation. This reduction of human interaction to an assessment of costs and benefits goes against the socially shared perspective. In this, Lysias' speech seems to go too far, and reveals itself as an exploration of possibilities that can be aptly described as marginal or extreme. What Lysias' speech engages in is in fact a form of κινεῖν τὰ ἀκίνητα – also and especially in its gerundive aspect. By endorsing a perspective on human relationships that emphasizes self-interested calculation over εὔνοια, Lysias is treading on dangerous

ground.

But this is not the only ὑπόθεσις Lysias re-examines. Παιδεραστία implies that the ἐραστής can actually teach something to the ἐρώμενος. This implies that the ἐραστής has to be someone who possesses φρονεῖν. This assumption is challenged by Lysias. Once again, Lysias employs traditional conceptions about ἔρως in order to build his argument, namely the conception of ἔρως as a form of madness. This is something Lysias insists a great deal on and can be seen as the fundamental aspect of the whole speech: the opposition between the madness of ἔρως and the sanity that characterizes the non-lover. If ἔρως is a form of madness – an assumption that Lysias does not challenge and adopts completely – then it is impossible for the ἐραστής to benefit the ἐρώμενος in the way he proclaims he will. The ἐραστής will not have the competence necessary to deliver on his promise of imparting knowledge on the ἐρώμενος. Being a madman, the ἐραστής is in no way or form qualified to fulfil the pedagogic components of παιδεραστία. This means that, even if one were to concede the presence of εὔνοια in ἔρως, the fact that ἐραστής is deprived of φρονεῖν would result in him being unable to convert his εὔνοια in any practical results. According to terms drawn in Lysias' speech, an ἐραστής imbued with εὔνοια would be nothing but a well-meaning fool.

In the end of Lysias' speech, the connection between ἔρως and μανία is firmly established. Furthermore, ἔρως continues to be considered a destructive force that should be avoided. But, most importantly of all, Lysias does not at any moment challenge the connection between φρονεῖν – knowing reality as it really is – and the socially approved conceptions he himself employs to construct his speech. For Lysias, φρονεῖν is what most people possess in their normal condition; the absence of φρονεῖν, μανία, is something that only happens in exceptional circumstances, for example, as when one falls in love.

4.2. Socrates' first speech: revising the ὑποθέσεις of παιδεραστία's official speech and Lysias' speech

The text of the *Phaedrus* emphasizes the elements of continuity between the speech of Lysias and Socrates' first speech. These two speeches have the same epideictic programme, i.e., to present plausible, interesting and impressive arguments in favour of the idea that χαριστέον μὴ ἐρῶντι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐρῶντι (227c6-7). For this purpose, Phaedrus allows Socrates to keep one of Lysias' main ὑποθέσεις, viz. that the one who is in love is

more affected by illness (μᾶλλον νοσεῖν) than the one who is not in love (236a7-b1). According to the epideictic programme, the main difference between the speeches would be a formal difference: Socrates is to present new and better arguments in favour of the same basic thesis. In terms of content, one is not to expect a great degree of innovation. Socrates is rather expected to excel Lysias in the way he presents the arguments, in the formal composition of the speech. According to Socrates himself, it is more a matter of διάθεσις than of εὕρεσις (236aff.).

This emphasis on the formal component of the speech, in detriment of its content, points to a deeper element of continuity. In spite of the formal differences between the speeches, they share the same basic outlook on the importance of the formal elements. What is really important in the sequence of epideictic speeches is that each one of the one surpasses the previous ones. What is at stake is the formal perfection of each of the speeches. The prevalence given to the formal aspect constitutes in itself an element of ἀκίνητον. It represents an emphasis on the rhetorical quality of the speech, making its relationship with the truth secondary in importance. But the fact that Socrates' first speech greatly surpasses Lysias' speech in formal perfection highlights the chaotic and distracted nature of the latter.

Socrates' first speech, then, carries out what Lysias started: the challenging of παιδεραστία's ὑποθέσεις. And he does this by taking as far as possible the opposition between εὔνοια and ἔρως already present in the previous speech. This opposition defines the characterization of the lover in this speech as a diseased person, completely dominated by the tyrant ἔρως, and, in the same way, behaves like a tyrant towards the ἐρώμενος (238e2-239a4). The application of a logic of consumption to this kind of erotic relationship is an extreme version of what Lysias had already done. Without εὔνοια, the lover will behave towards the beloved in the same way a famished person behaves towards a tasty steak. He will deal with the beloved without considering his well-being in any way whatsoever, with the disastrous consequences described by Socrates (239a1-241d1). Socrates' first speech also maintains the idea put forward by Lysias that ἔρως is opposed to φρονεῖν. Ἔρως can thus be described as a form of madness that takes control of the ἐραστής and leads him to metaphorically devour the beloved.

In a way, Socrates' first speech could be read as Lysias' speech taken to the extreme. Socrates picks up from where Lysias started, but does not seem to advance it

that much; he just makes everything more terrifying. Socrates' mission, as stated in the conversation with Phaedrus that precedes the speech, is actually just to state better what Lysias already had said. According to the terms set out by Phaedrus, Socrates had to use the same ὑπόθεσις[303].

However, there is a way in which Socrates modifies Lysias' speech in a profound and radical way. He challenges an assumption that is present in Lysias' speech, an assumption Lysias does not seem to be aware of, or, at least, an assumption he adopts from the traditional conceptions on ἔρως and that he never explicitly acknowledges. This assumption concerns the very nature of ἔρως. In the traditional conception, ἔρως is usually understood as an external force that invades and takes control. The one who is in love loses sovereignty over himself and must obey this external force. Ἔρως then leads the one who is in love on a destructive path. The one who is in love behaves in a bizarre way, does things no one in their right mind would even dream of doing. The one who is in love acts like a madman and will surely be considered as such by any sane person who looks at his behaviour. All of this is interpreted as being caused by an exogenous force.

This interpretation, however, is challenged by Socrates, who presents an alternative model for understanding this phenomenon. In the beginning of the speech, Socrates proceeds to define ἔρως (237b6ff.). This is already a major, albeit methodological, difference from Lysias' speech. This methodological difference is the origin of a substantial difference. In his attempt to define ἔρως, Socrates embarks in a description of human nature. He makes use of an anthropological conception that describes human beings as intrinsically dual in nature. Human beings, as Socrates states, are composed of ἐπιθυμία and δόξα, two opposing forces that pull in different directions: the former towards pleasure, the latter towards τὸ ἄριστον. The opposition between these two principles turns human nature into a battlefield of sorts. There is a real conflict between them and, according to the balance of power, one will be oriented towards one goal or the other, in either a state of ὕβρις or σωφροσύνη. Ἔρως is then defined as an extreme case of ὕβρις – a ὕβρις whose desire is oriented towards the possession and enjoyment of beautiful people (or boys) (237d3-5, 338b5-c3).

[303] *Phaedrus*, 236a7-b4: "ποιήσω οὖν καὶ ἐγὼ οὕτως· τὸ μὲν τὸν ἐρῶντα τοῦ μὴ ἐρῶντος μᾶλλον νοσεῖν δώσω σοι **ὑποτίθεσθαι**, τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν ἕτερα πλείω καὶ πλείονος ἄξια εἰπὼν τῶνδε παρὰ τὸ Κυψελιδῶν ἀνάθημα σφυρήλατος ἐν Ὀλυμπίᾳ στάθητι." This is the only occurrence of the term ὑπόθεσις or any of its correlates in the *Phaedrus*.

This conception of human nature turns the exogenous ἔρως into an endogenous force. Ἔρως is no longer the invading force: it is the consequence of a specific balance of power within human nature, in the context of a permanent state of conflict. By the same token, the madness associated with ἔρως is no longer caused by an external force, but results from an inner conflict. By presenting this endogenous model, Socrates introduces an alternative to the previous exogenous model. The exogenous model can no longer be considered the exclusive model by simple lack of alternative.

The description of human nature Socrates produced has consequences that go far beyond the origin and nature of ἔρως. In fact, what Socrates presents is a whole "theory" of human nature, which explains human actions, behaviours, both "normal" and "pathological". In this, Socrates' first speech contrasts greatly with Lysias' speech. In Lysias' speech, no attention was given to these matters. It made use, by default and implicitly, of the socially shared beliefs regarding human nature and motivations. Socrates' first speech, by presenting an actual "theory" and employing a discourse similar to the one employed in different kinds of τέχνη, also highlights this deficit of attention in Lysias' speech.

Regardless of the accuracy of the anthropological conception given voice to Socrates' first speech, the simple fact that such conception is explicitly articulated is enough to reveal a significant blind spot in Lysias' speech. The systematic and "technical" nature of Socrates' first speech emphasizes, by contrast, the disjointed, inaccurate and distracted nature of Lysias' speech. Compared with Socrates' first speech, and as a result its production, Lysias' speech comes to be seen, in hindsight, as being plagued by blind spots, dead angles, in other words, populated by moments of οἴεσθαι εἰδέναι.

4.3. The first section of the palinode as a revision of the ὑποθέσεις of παιδεραστία's official speech and of Lysias' and Socrates' speeches

As the previous speeches, the palinode will proceed with a re-examination of a set of ὑποθέσεις. This re-examination will, however, be much more radical, even revolutionary. For the purposes of our analysis, we have divided the palinode in two major sections. The first section corresponds to the analysis of the three first kinds of beneficial μανία (243e7-245a6). The second section, much larger than the first, corresponds to the analysis of erotic μανία. This division is not arbitrary. Not only is erotic μανία the main

subject of the palinode, but also, as we will see in the following chapters, the ontological, anthropological and theological ideas surrounding the second part of the palinode are radically different from the ones we can find in the first part. Since the in depth analysis of the fourth kind of beneficial μανία is still to come, we will for now concentrate on the first part of the palinode. The process of revision of ὑποθέσεις performed by the second part of the palinode will be addressed in the next chapter, when we examine the profound changes at stake in that text.

In accordance with the structure we have already identified, the first part of the palinode revises several ὑποθέσεις that were present in all the previous speeches, including the ones related to παιδεραστία. This is done by directly addressing the conception of ἔρως as a form of μανία. Socrates deals with this in a way that, in hindsight, might be seen as unexpected. He does not deny that ἔρως is a kind of μανία. Rather, he denies the assumption that all μανία is harmful. In this case, we are dealing with two different albeit closely related ὑποθέσεις: ἔρως as μανία, and μανία as harmful. Socrates identifies the first one, makes it explicit, turning a hidden ὑπόθεσις into an explicit assumption. He denies the second one and explicitly puts forward a different, explicit, ὑπόθεσις: in some cases, μανία is not only beneficial, but superlatively so (244a6-8). It is important to emphasize this fundamental aspect of the palinode: it keeps the fundamental ὑπόθεσις of the previous speeches, sc. that ἔρως is a form of μανία, but it radically reappraises the value of μανία. Μανία is no longer to be considered absolutely harmful, as the previous speeches assumed, but, at least in a few specific cases, μανία is not only beneficial, but one of the greatest blessings.

The re-examination of this hidden ὑπόθεσις, unlike the previous cases we have mentioned, happens as the consequence of a dramatic event: a divine sign. This δαιμόνιον σημεῖον stops Socrates as he is about to leave and forces him to stay to expiate his fault (242b7-c3). But what kind of fault are we talking about? The seriousness (or mock seriousness) of this situation contrasts heavily with the playfulness displayed previously through the dialogue. The two previous speeches were epideictic in nature. They were display pieces, made to show the authors' skills on speech making. They were not expected to be important statements on the issues that they have taken as their subject. They might contain theses that merit analysis, but their explicit intention is quite different. But now that the δαιμόνιον σημεῖον is forcing Socrates to reconsider his statements, the game becomes serious. It is now a case of blasphemy, liable to severe punishment by the

gods. It is fitting that this event is caused by a divine sign, considering the religious aspect of the phenomenon at stake.

But this does not seem to exhaust the meaning of such occurrence. Something much more basic than that seems to be at stake: for the first time, it is explicitly stated that some of the theses adopted in the first two speeches need to be revised. Revisions are no longer discreet and unassuming: they will now become absolutely explicit. The movements of revision are no longer hidden. But these still do not apparently result from any kind of analysis or reasoning. We are still quite far away from the dialectical revision of ὑποθέσεις we have found in the analogy of the divided line. The divine sign shows Socrates that what he has done is not right, that he committed blasphemy; he now has to reverse his position. This seems to be the normal way the so called Socratic δαίμων intervenes: by sending a sign preventing Socrates from doing or saying something. It is a negative intervention; it does not contribute with something positive. In this sense, it is quite different from what will soon be described as the phenomena of possession in the palinode. Socrates is not overtaken by an exterior force; he does not lose control of himself. He is sent a sign, and, according to that sign, he reverses is course of action. In another sense, however, it is somewhat similar to forms of μανία that will be analysed: even in its negative form, the δαιμόνιον σημεῖον gives Socrates an extra portion of knowledge. The δαιμόνιον σημεῖον shows Socrates that he is wrong, frees him from a false opinion - and that is the beginning of every positive knowledge.

Socrates, Lysias and Phaedrus have offended a powerful deity, Ἔρως, and have to make amends. This introduces a religious component to the matter that had not been explicitly shown before – although it was always present in the cultural background. Ἔρως is a god and it is as a god that he is able to exert such power over men. This had not been brought into the foreground, but it is now made explicit and urgent, in the form of a threat. Regardless of how serious we can take the idea that Socrates might be punished for his speech against Ἔρως, it is impossible not to acknowledge that this represents a twist in the direction the dialogue was apparently taking. If previous revisions were introduced within the specific framework of the epideictic speeches, this new speech assumes the character of an offering to a god, of a sacrifice, of an act of purification (243a2ff.). The new revisions are not playful or rhetorical in nature; they are presented as necessary measures to avoid divine punishment. But it is not only the case of changing one's statement in order to escape punishment from a god. The simple fact that stating

that a god is cause of harm to mankind is to be considered blasphemous. This is a consequence of a thesis regarding the nature of the gods that goes against traditional religious view: that gods can cause no harm. This alternative thesis regarding the nature of the gods is accepted without discussion by Phaedrus[304]. It constitutes another unexamined assumption, apparently taken as true. Starting from this assumption, Socrates now has to make a speech that shows in what way ἔρως can be considered good.

The way Socrates chooses to deal with the problem created by stating that ἔρως (or Ἔρως, the god) is harmful is somewhat surprising. He does not deny that ἔρως is a kind of μανία. He chooses to deny that μανία is always harmful. But he goes even further than that. To deny the harmfulness of something only implies that that thing is innocuous. To state that that thing is beneficial is a step further from that. But Socrates does precisely that and even more: ἔρως, along with the other forms of beneficial μανία he presents as examples, are not only good, but superlatively good. These forms of μανία represent exceptions to the general harmfulness of μανία. These forms of μανία make important contributions to the man's welfare, and seem to be recognized as such, in one way or the other, by mainstream ancient Greek culture. We have had the opportunity of examining these forms of μανία, prophetic, telestic and poetic, in the previous chapter. But we should emphasize again the important role they play as living examples of how μανία could have a positive connotation in ancient Greek culture. Interestingly enough, this moment of revision does not result from any kind of in-depth analysis of the phenomena. Socrates employs commonly held beliefs about prophetic, telestic and poetic μανίαι with little apparent examination and uses them as objections to the thesis he is trying to refute. In the same way that Lysias used the traditional views on ἔρως to show the inconsistencies of παιδεραστία, Socrates now employs traditional views on the different forms of beneficial μανία to show the inconsistencies of what is identified as one of the fundamental thesis of the previous speeches.

By making use of traditional cultural institutions to make his case for the superlative benign character of certain forms of μανία, Socrates is making use of a different kind of ὑπόθεσις. These ὑποθέσεις are explicit, but do not seem to have been the object of any kind of examination. They are rather presented as obvious and generally well-known. This represents a peculiar form of κινεῖν, together with an also peculiar

[304] See above, chapter IV, p. 283ff.

subsistence of ἀκίνητα. The ὑποθέσεις of the previous speeches move. But they move, not in the direction of something new, but they rather move "back", towards a more traditional perspective, which is has not been the object of examination. This constitutes a κινεῖν between different ἀκίνητα, and illustrates how the process of κινεῖν can be unsystematic and partial. The first moment of ἀκίνητον, sc. the thesis that states the unrestricted harmful nature of μανία, is found to be lacking and an alternative is introduced. But the now moving thesis is replaced by another instance of ἀκίνητον, another unexamined thesis. The mobilisation of the perspective can be, and in many cases is, haphazard, partial and unsystematic. This seems to be the case of the moments of κινεῖν between the different speeches that we have witnessed so far. In spite of the sometimes significant differences between the speeches, the tendency towards inertia remains dominant.

In this respect, the first section of the palinode is entirely conventional. It makes explicit use of traditional beliefs and τόποι with scarcely any change or development. The result is something that would be completely in tune with the normal everyday conceptions of its time and place. The phenomena the first section of the palinode explores might be extraordinary and exceptional, but their extraordinary character was completely integrated within the expectations of the socially shared perspective. The occurrence of these exceptional phenomena does not challenge the conceptions of reality at stake in the socially shared perspective. These remain stable, perfectly in place. The conception of μανία is only altered inasmuch as some room is created for the possibility of it not being harmful in all cases – or, to be more precise, of being superlatively good in some exceptional circumstances. But the counterpart of this thesis, as it is explored in the first section of the palinode, is that other forms of μανία, sc. the forms of μανία that are not beneficial and god-given, retain their harmful character, exactly like in the traditional conception. The identification of the opposite of μανία, φρονεῖν, does not seem to change. It is still completely identified with the socially shared perspective, with the kinds of behaviour, the kind of recognition of reality that is endorsed and prescribed by it. The first three kinds of beneficial μανία have no effect on the normal identification of φρονεῖν. The introduction of these exceptional kinds of μανία only slightly change the terms of the socially shared perspective in a way that does not alter it significantly.

Even from a formal perspective, the first section of the palinode is remarkably simple. After the sophisticated, complex and systematic organisation of Socrates' first

speech, the beginning of the palinode disappoints. The initial argument is made, and then we are presented with a series of corroborating examples, a simple enumeration of cases in which μανία plays a superlatively beneficial role. They are piled one after the other, juxtaposed, with no clear articulation between them apart from the fact that they fulfil the same role as examples of the basic initial thesis of the palinode. In this respect, the first section of the palinode resembles Lysias' speech: there is no link between the "arguments" apart from their role in supporting the main thesis, and the fact that they all emerge – even if sometimes in a distorted way – from commonly held beliefs.

The big changes, as we will see next, come with the second section of the speech. From a formal point of view, the gap between the simplicity and clumsiness of the first section and the sophistication, complexity and rhetorical brilliance of the second section will reproduce, and even maximise, the distance between the awkwardness of Lysias' speech and the formal perfection of Socrates' first speech. But the greatest changes will arrive with the introduction of strange, unexpected and revolutionary ontological, anthropological and theological conceptions that come with the palinode's peculiar notion of erotic μανία.

Chapter VI
The Palinode: Ontological Revolution

I cannot say why I felt so wildly wretched: it must have been temporary derangement; for there is scarcely cause. But, supposing at twelve years old I had been wrenched from the Heights, and every early association, and my all in all, as Heathcliff was at that time, and been converted at a stroke into Mrs. Linton, the lady of Thrushcross Grange, and the wife of a stranger: an exile, and outcast, thenceforth, from what had been my world. You may fancy a glimpse of the abyss where I grovelled!

Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*, chapter XII

Much madness is divinest sense
To a discerning eye;
Much sense the starkest madness.
'T is the majority
In this, as all, prevails.
Assent, and you are sane;
Demur, — you're straightway dangerous,
And handled with a chain.

Emily Dickinson, *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, Part One: Life, XI

1. Preliminary analysis of changes of perspective introduced in the presentation of the fourth kind of beneficial μανία: erotic μανία

In the previous chapter, we looked into the different steps of κινεῖν found in each of the speeches or, in the case of chapter on the first three kinds of beneficial μανία, section of speech. We also mentioned that these moments of κινεῖν were limited in nature and scope, although that does not detract from their importance and significance. But now we have to deal with what we could describe as a major mobilization of different sets of ὑποθέσεις. This mobilization is so wide in scope that it could be described as a revolution, an almost complete change in the way the notions that are at the centre of the inquiry are understood. Namely, ἔρως, which was previously described as the cause of terrible harm, will now be described by Socrates as a god-given μανία, as a result of a μεγίστη εὐτυχία[305]. In order to defend this statement, Socrates has taken upon himself a daunting task. Ἔρως is not to be merely rehabilitated, shown to be harmless, at the least, or even one of the many goods human beings might experience. Much more than that: ἔρως must be shown to be the greatest of goods, while, at the same time, being understood as a form of μανία.

This will lead Socrates to a revision of many of the notions and theses held or assumed by the previous speeches. While on the task of accomplishing such an ambitious programme, Socrates presents us with a set of major changes in perspective. What we witness in the second section of the palinode is a radical revision of a multiplicity of theses regarding the nature, status and role of the gods, the constitution and place of human beings in the world, and, in an even more radical way, the nature and constitution of reality itself. The ἀκίνητα that are mobilised go far beyond a reconsideration of the nature of specific kinds of μανία. In fact, that reconsideration, in the case of erotic μανία, demands and requires a massive, general, almost global mobilisation of ἀκίνητα. These changes are necessary in order to make the apparently outlandish claim that μανία ἐρωτική is the greatest of blessings for mortals justifiable and plausible. But they go far beyond the scope of erotic μανία – beyond even the scope of the *Phaedrus*. The statements of the second section of the palinode constitute a global mobilisation of ἀκίνητα, which, if taken seriously, would lead to a massive revision of commonly held perspectives

[305] 245b7-c1: "ἡμῖν δὲ ἀποδεικτέον αὖ τοὐναντίον, ὡς ἐπ' εὐτυχίᾳ τῇ μεγίστῃ παρὰ θεῶν ἡ τοιαύτη μανία δίδοται·"

regarding virtually everything. It is reality itself that is at stake – or to be more precise, the way we understand and recognise reality and ourselves.

We will start this chapter by going through these major changes in a preliminary and introductory way. These changes will then be analysed more thoroughly in the upcoming sections.

1.1. A different reality framework

The second part of the palinode confronts us with a new understanding of reality. This is done mostly by describing a mythical cosmology. By this we mean a global description of the constitution and organisation of the whole of reality. But this description is not homogeneous, nor is it static. The cosmological description of the second part of the palinode has a narrative component. In other words, it tells a story. This cosmological story, however, does not tell us about the origin of reality. It is not, for example, a creation myth. The story might describe the constitution of reality, but reality itself is not its central character. Rather, the focus of the cosmological story is on those beings that we can identify as human – in other words, us. What is at stake in the story told by the palinode is the evolution of human beings, from winged ψυχαί participating in the godly procession in the sky to wingless ψυχαί in exile on earth – and potentially back again to their previous winged condition. So the narrative concentrates on the location, position and situation of human ψυχαί within the cosmological framework. It is, so to speak, a story telling us the adventures and misadventures of each and every one of us. But, in order to properly understand these adventures and misadventures, one needs to understand the cosmological context, since this context is a fundamental determination of the each ψυχή's story.

In this sense, the cosmological description is a fundamental part of a narrative that aims to explain the human condition. It tries to provide an explanation for the current situation in which human ψυχαί are found: not as winged souls travelling through the sky, but rather wingless down here on earth. It is, in this sense, an aetiological myth – a myth that provides an explanation for a specific state of affairs. In this case, the second part of the palinode presents us with a myth that claims to explain our *de facto* condition. Unless we assume that it is the result of some kind of revelation, the myth must consist of an attempt at causal explanation for a phenomenon or set of phenomena already identified

and interpreted by Socrates. This implies a diagnosis of our *de facto* condition, an understanding of that of which the aetiological explanation is an explanation. The relation between aetiology and condition is not one of necessity. Rather, the explanation and the thing explained are autonomous. The aetiological explanation tries to explain this specific set of phenomena, more or less successfully, but the phenomena that are to be explained can be interpreted and analysed independently of the aetiological explanation. This means that it is possible to read the myth not as a mythical causal explanation, but rather as a description of our *de facto* condition. The importance of the myth lies mostly in its role as a description of a state of affairs that could be recognised (or not) regardless of the use of the myth to express. It is therefore possible to extract something meaningful, and even potentially true, about our own nature from the myth created by Socrates in his palinode. From this perspective, it becomes irrelevant whether we accept the mythical explanation as true or not. One can reject the myth itself as a fanciful and unbelievable fiction, but still be able to accept the description of our *de facto* condition contained therein. The value of the myth lies in how correct and accurate the aetiological description is, not in the myth itself being true[306].

With this in mind, it is time to consider the cosmology itself. The cosmology of the palinode includes three major elements, or regions of the universe. With two of these we are apparently already familiar with: the earth and the sky. But the third one is altogether new: the so-called ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the hypercelestial or hyperuranic place, a place above and beyond the sky[307]. This constitution of the world in three layers introduces an element of novelty. It changes the normal opposition between up,

[306] See CARVALHO, M. J., "Ἔρως and Πτέρως." in: CARVALHO, M. J., CAEIRO, A., TELO, H. (ed.), *In the Mirror of the Phaedrus*, Sankt Augustin, Academia Verlag, 2013, 167 -243, especially 200ff. Cf. CARVALHO, M. J., *Die Aristophanesrede in Platons Symposium*. Die Verfassung des Selbst, Würzburg, Königshausen & Neumann, 2009, 27f. See below, p. 422, p. 427, p. 451, p. 523, p. 580.

[307] Through most of the palinode, the earth seems to be the bottom of the cosmological framework, the place one falls down to when one loses one's wings. There are, however, some hints that there are regions even below the earth, which would amount to even more degraded anthropological conditions. There are only two explicit references to such a region in the palinode, at 249a5 and then at 257a1. This region is described as being below earth, "ὑπὸ γῆς" (257a1), and as a place of punishment, "κριθεῖσαι δὲ αἱ μὲν εἰς τὰ ὑπὸ γῆς δικαιωτήρια ἐλθοῦσαι δίκην ἐκτίνουσιν" (249a5). This "infra-earth", however, plays a very small role in the economy of the palinode. This is not surprising, since the cosmology of the narrative has an anthropological focus, i.e. the reality framework serves to provide a cosmological context to the story of the soul. It is also an aetiological myth, with the purpose of explaining the cause of the *de facto* human condition. For these reasons, it makes sense for the second part of the palinode to concentrate on the human soul as it inhabits, and as it inhabited (and may come to inhabit again) the sky. It also makes sense to concentrate on the soul's connection to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, since this is the decisive determination. An infra-earth would play a very limited role in explaining our *de facto* condition – except, as the palinode already suggests, as the ominous possibility of falling into an even more degraded situation.

represented by the sky, and down, represented by the earth, the place where human beings live, ἐνθάδε. The introduction of a third layer makes this opposition more complex. From the point of view of ἐνθάδε, there is no longer just an upper region, but two. This creates further distance from the top region, by the simple fact that that which we thought was above everything else is now revealed to be only an intermediate section.

The region beyond the sky, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, is a part of reality that, from the point of view of ἐνθάδε, is normally hidden. We are informed of its existence by Socrates in the palinode. There is more in the world than we tend to assume – and all that above the region we ourselves inhabit. It is like being at the foot of a mountain looking up to what we thought was the summit – and then the wind blows away the clouds that were covering the true summit, revealing that the mountain was much higher than what was usually assumed[308]. This new layer represents much more than just another element. This change is not merely quantitative. The status of the other two layers changes with the revelation of the third. The fact that this new part of reality is set above the sky means that it displaces the sky from its supreme position.

There is now something else occupying this supreme position – an absolute above. This absolute above is more than just a geographical feature. Symbolically, being up, above all the rest, has a strong connotation of superiority, sovereignty and power. Those who are powerful are set above the rest; that which is above is more important than that which is below. In the same way the sky is seen as being more important than the earth, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος will *a fortiori*, by being set above it, be more important than the sky. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, by being set above both earth and sky, will take precedence over both of them. The different regions of reality are qualitatively different, not at all homogenous with the other regions. It is not just a matter of relative position; it is not, in other words, a matter of topology. The topology reflects a hierarchy – the highest the region, the more important, noble, and divine it is. The highest region, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, is set high above the rest, not only from a topological point of view, but also, and

[308] The addition of another region above the sky is only relevant in the context of a closed cosmology, i.e. a cosmology that sees the universe as a closed, self-contained whole, with defined limits. In the context of a cosmology that conceives the universe as infinite or undeterminadably vast, the discovery of yet another region would not be as significant.

especially as it is the region that is first and foremost in the cosmological organisation of reality[309].

[309] A passage in *Republic* IX may help us understand the mechanism at play in the construction of this cosmology. Despite the difference in context, the discussion of the true and false ἄνω, true and false κάτω and true and false μέσον (584d2ff.) can provide us with something like a formal structure of the construction of this cosmology. In this passage, Socrates discusses how if someone in the lower region were to be transported upwards to the middle one, that person would believe he was in the uppermost region. Something similar would happen if that person were to be transported downwards. A relative position (i.e., being above or below X) would be understood as an absolute location (i.e., the uppermost or lowermost region of the universe). That person would ignore that there is something more above or below the region he was transported to due to his perspective on the constitution of reality. By this we mean that what is at stake here is a set of theses regarding the regions that make up reality, a set of theses that unknowingly leaves out important parts of reality, but that is nonetheless taken as true. When the μέσον is taken as if it were ἄνω or κάτω, the perspective produces a version of reality that is contracted and fragmentary, but that also appears as if it were rendering the totality of reality. The palinode, however, is not the only bit of the *corpus Platonicum* that follows this formal structure. In the *Phaedo*, we find a topographical description that, like the cosmology of the palinode, claims to be both true and novel, i.e., to be revealing something hitherto unknown about reality: a new region. The introduction of this unknown region has several consequences. Firstly, it shows that what we normally have access to is but a fragment of a much larger whole. Secondly, what is missing from our fragmentary perspective is not something irrelevant, but rather something fundamental for understanding the fragment itself. Thirdly, the fragment is presented as ontologically degraded in comparison with the hitherto unknown region. In other words, it is the unknown region that is "actually real", whereas the region we are already familiar with, the region we inhabit, is but an image of it. In the *Phaedo* (108e1ff.) the contrast is between what we think is the earth, but is actually nothing but one of the many hollows of the earth, and the "real" earth, set above it. As in the palinode, this cosmology alters the perception of our place in the universe in a radical way. We are not on the surface, with only the sky above us. What we call the earth is not the real earth, what we call the sky is not the real sky. We are rather stuck deep within a hole, and what we think is the uppermost region is only in fact an intermediate region – the real earth, above which there is the real sky, the ether. We are at least one level below where we thought we were. But to this topographical demotion corresponds also a loss of ontological status, and a corresponding loss in the effectiveness of our perspective. The beings we have access to in the hollow of the earth all pale in comparison with their counterparts in the real earth. Everything there is brighter, clearer, more distinct and more beautiful. Socrates employs an analogy to explain the difference between the real earth and the hollow we inhabit and commonly believe to be the earth: the hollow is to the real earth as the region under the sea is to the hollow. This is an application of the thought-pattern identified by Hermann Fränkel in a few fragments of Heracleitus (see chapter V, p. 342, n. 276, *supra*) Socrates invites us to imagine the perspective of someone living under the sea and how she would perceive what we believe to be the earth, if she were to swim to the surface and gaze upon it. In other words, Socrates uses a perspective that we can recognise as inferior to our own in order to explain how our perspective, which we naturally take as the standard, is lacking when compared with a perspective able to access a region, the real earth, which is alien to our normal perspective, but is nonetheless introduced in this passage as the "real reality". Our normal perspective, which has never had access to the real earth, is as faulty as the perspective of someone living under the sea, seeing only the things around her on the ocean floor, with no access to the place we inhabit. Unlike the palinode, however, our normal perspective is not situated in the bottom region, but rather in an intermediary one. But the role of the bottom region is to provide an analogue to our own situation regarding what a truly cognitive perspective would be. In this regard, we may not be living under the sea, but, compared with those living in the real earth, it is as if we were. We find another parallel to this in *Republic* VII, in the allegory of the cave (514a1ff.). This one, however, is more complex. Taken at face value, the allegory of the cave describes a region located below the one we inhabit, the bottom of a cave. It tells the story of the people who are prisoners in a cave, for whom the part of the cave they are facing towards is the whole world. But it also tells the story of how one of the prisoners might be released, and discover, by stages, that there is reality beyond the confines of that corner of that cave. For the prisoner, the world expands as he ascends, and what is left behind loses in status. This ascent culminates when the prisoner gets out of the cave entirely and comes into the surface, which, in the terms of the allegory, corresponds to the part of the world we live in. It would seem, then, that we are dealing with two regions: a bottom one, the cave, and an upper one, the one we inhabit. But the fact that this is set up as an allegory

The importance of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος becomes even more evident when we consider the relationship each ψυχή has with it. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the region every ψυχή strives to reach. According to the myth, it is the *terminus ad quem* of the movement of every single soul in the cosmos. This establishes the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος not only as the geographical summit of the world, symbolically the most important part of it, but also as the ultimate destiny every soul, in its movement, attempts to reach. Each ψυχή is under a pressure that leads upwards towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This constitutes a kind of "reverse gravity" – a force that pulls one up, instead of down. This "reverse gravity" is symbolised by the fact that every ψυχή is winged – and, in the economy of the myth, it is the presence of the wings that allows each airborne ψυχή both to remain airborne and to fly upwards towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The presence of wings, or, to be more precise, the fact that each and every ψυχή is constitutively winged, indicates that the ψυχαί's natural place, the place where they naturally belong is up there, as high as possible. But this upwards pressure is also described in terms of desire and yearning, even hunger. Going up is not just a motion the ψυχή is naturally engaged in; it is also what the ψυχή wants, needs and yearns to do.

The upwards pressure, however, is not the only one in play. It is at all times accompanied by a counter-balancing downwards tension [310]. These two opposing pressures play a fundamental role in the fate of the souls. This role is more conspicuous when the souls are airborne: the wings allow the souls to stay in the sky, are the instruments in their upwards movement towards the the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and represent the yearning to reach the superlative place; the weight, on the other hand, adds difficulty to the ascent, and, if the wings for some reason fail to fulfil their task and the

changes the meaning of the story. We are like those prisoners at the bottom of the cave. This suggests that we here at the surface are as if we were retained in a corner of reality, unaware that there is still a vast world beyond it. It proposes that there is something above us – that what we assume to be the true above is actually just a middle. These two parts of the *corpus Platonicum* share a similar construction with the mythical narrative of the palinode: reality is composed of qualitatively heterogeneous regions, set above one another. The uppermost region is usually described in terms that make it clear that it has ontological primacy over the others. In contrast, the other regions are described as being "less real" or "less true" than the uppermost one. In these cosmologies, truth and reality might not be the only relevant determinations, but most of the emphasis is put on them. But perhaps the most important similarity is the fact that the uppermost region, the most important and significant one, is somehow hidden from us.

[310] The terms used related to the notion of weight, τὸ ἐμβριθές, and the phenomenon of something becoming heavy, weighing down something. See: 246d6-7: "Πέφυκεν ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις τὸ ἐμβριθὲς ἄγειν ἄνω μετεωρίζουσα ᾗ τὸ τῶν θεῶν γένος οἰκεῖ"; 248c5ff: "ὅταν δὲ ἀδυνατήσασα ἐπισπέσθαι μὴ ἴδῃ, καί τινι συντυχίᾳ χρησαμένη λήθης τε καὶ κακίας πλησθεῖσα βαρυνθῇ, βαρυνθεῖσα δὲ πτεροῤῥυήσῃ τε καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν πέσῃ".

soul is unable to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the weight will become the decisive force, pushing the soul down to crash into the earth. But both weight and wings will still play a fundamental role even after the crash: the weight will, as we shall see, be a fundamental limiting factor in the mobility of the fallen soul, retaining it away from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος; the wings, on the other hand, will, in certain circumstances, sprout out again, and provide once again a counter-balancing force to the weight, which might cause the soul once again to return to the sky and reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The downwards pressure constituted by the weight can also be understood as a form of attachment to what is below – first and foremost the earth. The earth, which is relegated to the background in the description of the souls' procession to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, is nonetheless always present: as the *terminus ad quem* of the catastrophic fall, as the destiny of all the souls that fail to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Since failure is an ever-present risk for the human souls, the prospect of crashing down to earth is a possibility that haunts the human souls at every moment.

The idea of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as something the ψυχαί need is present throughout the palinode. In the case of the human ψυχαί, this need is felt and plays a decisive role also after the fall and the loss of wings, i.e., even after the psyche has lost the ability to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. At stake here is a case of dependency – the soul needs the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and this need determines the life of the soul whatever state it may find itself in. The language of yearning, desire, need, but also of love and veneration are used throughout the palinode to describe the relationship between the soul and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, be it direct, be it indirect, when, for example, one falls in love. What becomes clear is that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is something human souls cannot be without. If one has lost direct access to it, then one must make do with whatever replacement one can find. These replacements, however, are only acceptable and can only fulfil somehow the role played by the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as far as one's soul is dominated by λήθη – a λήθη that has made one forget about the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. But this λήθη is not absolute, since it does not eliminate the need for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The need is still there, but in such a confused and dazzed way that one will mistake lowly replacements for the superlative, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. What Socrates is saying is that all our needs, desires and yearnings are for the superlative, for the highest of the high, the

best of the best, and that we only become content with anything less than that as a result of the dimming effects of λήθη[311].

The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος has what we could designate as *teleological precedence*. This makes all the difference. Without this fundamental element, the introduction of a different level to reality would probably be of little consequence. Going back to the image of the mountain, the person looking up the mountain, after finding out that the real summit was much higher than previously believed, after a few moments of wonder, would just dismiss this fact as ultimately irrelevant. He thought the mountain was lower than it really was; he was mistaken; he was corrected; that correction was duly noted; everything can carry on as normal. But if that person is about to climb the mountain, or, even worse, *must* climb the mountain, finding out the summit is much higher than previously believed makes all the difference. The part of the mountain previously assumed to be the top is now just an intermediate section, just a place we have to cross to get to where we must go – and that far away summit is actually where we aim to be.

But the point of view of the myth is not from the foot of the mountain. We are not shown the world, at least not until later on in the myth, from the point of view of ἐνθάδε. We are immediately put in the intermediate section, the sky. Our point of view is transported upwards by the myth itself – and immediately shown that what was before

[311] The idea that the ψυχαί need the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is often expressed through the metaphor of feeding or nourishment: 246e2, 247d2, 247d3, 248b5, 248c6. In other passages, the relationship is described by using the language of desire, yearning or longing. So Socrates uses the verb γλίχομαι and the noun σπουδή (248b5) to describe the eagerness of the human souls striving to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος (248a5). But he also uses terms like πόθος (250c6, 251e2, 252a7, 253e6), ἵμερος (251c6, 251d4, 251e4) or προθυμία (249d6, 253c2, 253c3) to describe this relationship, especially in its indirect modality, e.g., when one falls in love. One should note, however, that these terms, which could perfectly well describe the relationship between an ἐραστής and his ἐρώμενος in a more conventional perspective, are nonetheless here applied to the relationship between a fallen soul and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος (even if, at least in the beginning only through τὸ κάλλος) – mediated by contact with the ἐρώμενος. Socrates is using erotic vocabulary to describe the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but this relationship is illustrated by a description of an erotic, or to be more precise, pederastic relationship between an ἐραστής and an ἐρώμενος. What a pederastic relationship is, however, is reinterpreted in light of the radical ontological, theological and anthropological changes that occur in the second part of the palinode. Therefore, the pederastic relationship is described in its connection with the desire for the superlative, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. It becomes clear that the pederastic relationship and the ἐρώμενος are replacements for what truly is the object of every desire: the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This becomes evident when Socrates, in a speech with the explicit programme of providing an ἐγκώμιον of ἔρως, where ἔρως is the ostensive main theme, uses the term ἔρως and similar words to describe not the relationship between ἐραστής and ἐρώμενος, but rather the desire of the fallen soul for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος (250d5, d6, d7). The true ἔρως is the one that connects the soul to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος; the other is an inferior replacement. It is therefore natural for Socrates also to use in this context vocabulary that denotes intense emotional reactions, such as φρίκη (251a4, 251b1), ἔκπληξις (250a6, 255b4), δεῖμα (252a5), as well as religious veneration, σέβεσθαι (250e3, 251a5, 252a7, 254b7). See below p. 432, n. 334.

considered to be the uppermost region, the sky, is actually only an intermediate region. We are then able to look down to earth, where we would normally be, and upwards towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. What Socrates does here is to reproduce the structure of the normal point of view, but placing it in a very different location. In our normal day-to-day understanding of reality (sc. the understanding of reality that does not include a ὑπερουράνιος τόπος) our point of view is located in the second highest region. The sky is the uppermost region, and we are located right below it, here on earth. So we can look up and see only the sky, with no hint of the existence of anything beyond it. In Socrates' palinode, our point of view is located in the sky, and looks predominantly upwards, towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος – but it leaves behind the region we normally inhabit, the earth. The centre of our normal point of view is therefore revealed to be located well below the uppermost region. If we were to maintain the parallel with the image of the mountain, we are being shown that the mountain is much higher than we previously believed, but, at the same time, we are displaced from the foot of the mountain upwards into the sky.

This is another major difference between the cosmological description of the myth and our normal perspective on reality. In the myth, the sky is the central region, the region that serves as the main seat of movement. The souls inhabit the sky and move within the sky. The sky is the original location of the soul, not the earth. From our normal perspective, earth is the place we inhabit, the place where our life takes its course, the natural place for human beings to be. The myth changes the focus from earth to the sky and the place above the sky. In the beginning of the myth, earth seems to be almost an afterthought. It is mostly presented as the point of view from which our point of view as readers has departed when we were taken to sky level by the myth. But the earth has a fundamental role to play, a role very different from the one we would expect. If the sky is the place souls normally inhabit and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος the place they strive for, the earth is the place they fall to when something goes wrong. The earth is no longer seen as our natural habitat. The earth is below the place souls normally live in, and even further from the place they want to go to. So the earth is seen as the place souls crash into and wherein they are forced to live after they lose their ability to fly, to stay in their normal place. The earth is a place of exile and, in that sense, the opposite of the ὑπερουράνιος

τόπος as the *terminus ad quem* of the movement of the souls[312]. It cannot even be considered the *terminus a quo* of that movement, since that designation belongs to the sky itself. According to the myth, we naturally dwell above, in the sky, and desire and strive to get even further up, beyond the sky. The earth is, therefore, located even below the *terminus ad quem* of the journey. To be located on the earth, which we normally understand as our natural place, corresponds, in the economy of the palinode, to a situation akin to exile – to a situation characterised by displacement and by loss of dignity. A human ψυχή is therefore characterised by an enormous range of possible locations within the cosmology of the palinode, the different locations corresponding to different existential situations. A human soul can have access to the highest of the high, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος[313]. But it may also fall down to earth, become a mere fragment of what it was was, and be deprived of direct contact with the truth, forced to deal with mere faded memories and images. In other words, a human soul may become a degraded version of its own true nature – an image or a shadow of itself.

When our point of view is elevated from earth to sky level, we are not transported halfway up the mountain – we are rather shown that the sky is actually the foot of the mountain and that the place we normally dwell in, our ἐνθάδε, is actually located below that.

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[312] See EMPEDOCLES, 115 DK. The idea of earth as a place of exile for fallen souls immediately invokes the so called *Καθαρμοί* of Empedocles. In this poem, Empedocles seems to describe how mortals are fallen δαίμονες, doomed on account of an unspecified fault to wander down here on earth for three times ten thousand years. The similarities are clear, and certain formulations that we find in the palinode are clear echos of Empedocles' poem. For example, the θεσμὸς Ἀδραστείας (248c3) of the palinode is a clear echo of Empedocles' Ἀνάγκης χρῆμα. The idea that we are all fallen souls seems to have been a basic belief of Orphism and Pythagoreanism. See HACKFORTH, 82; FRUTIGER, P., *Les Mythes de Platon*. Les mythes de Platon. Étude philosophique et littéraire, Paris, Alcan, 1930, 254-260; GUTHRIE, W. K. C., *Orpheus and the Greek Religion*: A Study of the Orphic Movement, London, Methuen & Co., 1935; DETIENNE, M., La démonologie d'Empédocle, *Revue des Études Grecques* 72 (1959), 1-17; KAHN, C. H., Religion and natural philosophy in Empedocles' doctrine of the soul, *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 42 (1960), 3-35; CASADIO, G., La metempsicosi tra Orfeo e Pitagora, in BORGEAUD, P. (ed.), *Orphisme et Orphée*, Geneva, Recherches et Rencontre, 1991, 119-155; EBERT, T., A Presocratic Philosopher behind the *Phaedrus*: Empedocles, *Revue de Philosophie Ancienne* 11 (1993), 211-227; O'BRIEN, D., Empedocles: the wandering daimon and the two poems, *Aevum Antiquum* 1 (2001), 79-179; GAIN, F., Le statut du « daimon » chez Empédocle, *Philosophie Antique* 7 (2007), 121-150; HUFFMAN, C. A., The Pythagorean Conception of the Soul from Pythagoras to Philolaus, in FREDE, D., REIS, B. (ed.), *Body and Soul in Ancient Philosophy*, Berlin, 2009, 21-43; YUNIS, *ad* 248c3.

[313] The "logic" of the construction of the palinode in terms of its cosmological framework is one of duplication: where our normal understanding sees one region above the one we inhabit, the palinode shows us there are two. This "logic" of duplication, however, has limits. One of these limits is the position of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the highest of the high, the best of the best, in one word, the superlative. It is the absolute above. There is nothing above it. In the economy of the palinode, this indicates that the relationship of the souls, both human and divine, is with the superlative itself – an absolute superlative, with nothing above it.

But we find even further changes of perspective in this myth with even more dramatic consequences. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the place and seat of what is designated as οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα[314]. This is a very emphatic and seemingly redundant formulation and immediately establishes a contrast with what is outside the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The "ὄντως οὖσα" not only stresses the reality and ontic consistency of the οὐσία found in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but it also relegates the οὐσίαι found elsewhere to a lower degree of reality. If the οὐσία found there is so emphatically described as ὄντως οὖσα, what can we, therefore, say about the οὐσίαι located elsewhere but that they are somehow μὴ ὄντως οὖσαι? The notion of οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, however, is a formal notion. It corresponds to the notion of "perfect" being, "perfect" reality, i.e., it describes a status. By this we mean that the notion of οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is not necessarily translated into a specific content. Rather, it constitutes an ontological ideal, a being or reality that is, so to speak, "perfectly" real. It so happens, however, that that is status usually attributed to our normal, everyday perspective. The beings we usually have access to are commonly recognised as being ὄντως οὖσαι, i.e., as not lacking in reality. Only in very specific circumstances to we find ourselves having contact with beings to which we recognise as being anything less than perfectly real. All in all, our usual perspective puts us in contact with beings the status of which formally corresponds to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα.

What the palinode tells us, however, is that the status we normally attribute to the beings we have access to in our everyday perspective actually belongs to a being or beings located in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. In other words, the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is not to be found here on earth, among the beings we normally have access to, but rather far away and high above, in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα that is to be found in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not some kind of hyperbeing or hyperreality; it is rather the real, true being, the real, true reality. This means that what we find elsewhere, namely here on earth, will have an inferior degree of being or reality. The standard is not set by

[314] 247c3: "τὸν δὲ ὑπερουράνιον τόπον οὔτε τις ὕμνησέ πω τῶν τῇδε ποιητὴς οὔτε ποτὲ ὑμνήσει κατ᾽ ἀξίαν. ἔχει δὲ ὧδε – τολμητέον γὰρ οὖν τό γε ἀληθὲς εἰπεῖν, ἄλλως τε καὶ περὶ ἀληθείας λέγοντα – ἡ γὰρ ἀχρώματός τε καὶ ἀσχημάτιστος καὶ ἀναφὴς οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, ψυχῆς κυβερνήτῃ μόνῳ θεατὴ νῷ, περὶ ἣν τὸ τῆς ἀληθοῦς ἐπιστήμης γένος, τοῦτον ἔχει τὸν τόπον." See THOMPSON, *ad locum*; HACKFORTH, 80-82; SINAIKO, 63ff.; DE VRIES, *ad locum*; ROWE, *ad locum*; NICHOLSON, 180ff.; YUNIS, *ad locum*. The palinode, as one would expect from a text in the *corpus Platonicum*, especially one with such a pronounced poetic character, displays a degree of terminological variation. So the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is also referred to as τὰ ἔξω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (247c2), τὸ εἴσω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (247e2), ὁ ἔξω τόπος (248a2) and τὸ ἀληθείας πεδίον (248b5); what is designated at first as οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα (247c7), will be later referred to under a number of other terms: τὰ ὄντα ὄντως (247e3, 249c4), τἀληθῆ (247d3), τὸ ὄν (248b3), τὰ ἀληθά (248c3), ἡ ἀλήθεια (249b5), τὰ ὄντα (248a5, 249e5), ἱερά (250a4), τιμιά (250b1), ἐραστά (250d6).

what we usually see as beings, in relation to which the beings found in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος are excessive. The beings found elsewhere are rather the ones who are ontologically deficient in relation to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα.

The oddity of this fact is compounded by the way this οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is described by Socrates. The οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is colourless, ἀχρώματος, shapeless, ἀσχημάστιστος, intangible, ἀναφής. This is a being that is completely inaccessible to the senses, and yet is said to be that which really is. This description could hardly be more distant from what we spontaneously believe. It implies that all those beings that surround us, all those beings that we are able to access through our senses, that we can see or touch, are somehow less real than whatever is to be found in the region above the sky. This gives *ontological precedence* to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and relegates earth to a position of inferiority also on an ontological respect. In fact, every reality but the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, as the seat of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, will be affected by some kind of ontological deficit. All other realities will be found lacking. This means that, in between the true being that is the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, and the absolute absence of being, we will find in the palinode several instances of μεταξύ, intermediate stages in between being and non-being. Counting in the Greek fashion, the myth implies that whatever beings we have access to ἐνθάδε, those beings will be three degrees below the ones found in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος: below the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος itself, but also the sky. It seems that it is from this ontological precedence that the other modes of precedence previously mentioned derive. It is because the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the seat of οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα that the soul yearns to reach it.

1.2. Methodological interlude

What we did in the previous section was go through some elements of the radical change in perspective introduced in the second part of the palinode. But these are only a few of those elements, and are, in any case, insufficient to show the truly revolutionary nature of this text. The complexity of the second part of the palinode, which is the stage of a global mobilisation of ἀκίνητα, turns providing an account of the revolutionary character of the text into a very difficult task. In fact, the sheer number of different elements and their complex interrelations make our work all the more difficult – akin to negotiating one's way through a labyrinth. The palinode might be a story, but our task is

not to retell it; rather, it is to analyse it, to understand its meaning and its consequences to our understanding of the phenomena at stake in this study. In order to achieve this goal, in order to fully realise how revolutionary the second part of the palinode really is, we have to isolate and examine the different components of the narrative. In other words, we need to carry on the task we have started in the previous section.

This, however, forces us to confront another methodological problem. The labyrinthine character of the palinode allows for a multiplicity of paths, for a variety of entry points. The text is so complex that one could begin to unravel it from a variety of different angles. There is no mandatory path, and it is unclear which (if any) allows for a better understanding of what is at stake. And yet, in order to present as clear and complete a picture as possible of the revolutionary character of this text, one has to make a decision, choose a path and an entry point. We have started our exploration of the second part of the palinode by considering the cosmological and ontological changes. The reason for this decision is that these provide the framework in which the other changes are integrated. From here on we will try to carry on following the thread we have have been following so far – by identifying the elements of change that are more easily identifiable from and closer to the point we have arrived at so far. By this we mean that we will proceed our exploration of this labyrinth in light of what we have discovered so far regarding the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, and especially the consequences, already alluded to, that the location of οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος has for the status of our perspective.

1.3. A different understanding of φρονεῖν

We have mentioned before that φρονεῖν corresponds to that form of cognitive access that is understood as being effective in rendering reality as it really is. In other words: for one to be considered φρόνιμος, one ought to be able to have an understanding of reality that does not diverge from or is deformed in relation to what actually exists. It is a notion that characterizes the quality of our access to reality. It is a form of transparency, of clarity, of lucidity. It is, in other words, a declaration that guarantees the health of one's point of view. It indicates cognitive health. Φρονεῖν is therefore a formal notion. There is no necessary connection between φρονεῖν as effective access to reality and any specific content rendered. This means that φρονεῖν is a seal of quality affixed to

our mode of access that attests the reliability of our access. It is a seal of quality affixed to whatever appears to us, stating that this is what it should be: a true appearance of something real.

Φρονεῖν is usually considered to be the default status of one's point of view. In normal circumstances, it is assumed that one is in possession of a point of view that renders reality as it really is. Not being in possession of φρονεῖν is considered to be an exceptional situation. This means that one assumes a correlation between φρονεῖν and the set of perspectives that human beings normally possess. This set of perspectives has a very strong social component. We tend to assume that is true whatever the group we are integrated in considers to be true. The theses that constitute the socially shared perspective are, therefore, ἀκίνητα. Even when there is some degree of deviation from what is established as the socially approved version of reality, it is usually very limited in scope and does not threaten that version as the standard against which any other version has to be judged. This is also closely connected with the way people lead their lives. The specific deformalisation of φρονεῖν that is associated with the socially shared perspective prescribes a set of actions and behaviours. These are judged not just by how they conform to the socially shared perspective, but also by their effectiveness. By this we mean that the φρόνιμος is usually conceived as someone who is able to navigate through life competently, achieving what corresponds to his or her self-interest. This means that not only is φρονεῖν associated with a or a variety of vital orientations, but that there are certain forms of vital orientation that, because they seem to be self-defeating and go against the person's own self-interest, are deemed to be incompatible with φρονεῖν.

This understanding of φρονεῖν as the default setting of our point of view, its connection to a socially shared perspective and its constitutive theses, as well its connection to what is normally understood as a competent way of leading one's life, is completely changed in the palinode. By presenting a completely different reality framework, Socrates implicitly rejects our normal version of reality as being φρόνιμος. Considering, *ex hypothesi*, that the version of reality presented in the palinode is true, the degree of deviation from the version normally held is so great as to challenge the overall quality of the access we have to reality. The global mobilisation of ἀκίνητα that occurs in the second part of the palinode modifies the theses held by the socially shared perspective to such a great degree that it inevitably raises questions regarding its supposedly φρόνιμος character. In fact, were it not for Socrates' palinode, we would not know of this layer of

reality; more important than that, we would not even know that, until now, we had had access to the existence of but a fragment of what really exists.

However, by leaving out the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, our normal point of view is more than just severely fragmentary. It is fragmentary without even being aware that it is only dealing with a fragment. But, as we have seen above, this is not just a matter of leaving something out. That which is left out is actually the single most important and fundamental dimension of reality: the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the seat of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. This means that the point of view previous to the palinode endorses as φρόνιμος a version of reality exclusively populated by beings that are several degrees below that which actually consists of true beings. Therefore, the version of reality that is normally assumed to be φρόνιμος is shown to be affected by at least three defects: 1) it is but a fragment of a larger whole; 2) it is a fragment that is wrongly assumed to correspond to the whole; 3) the fragment that is assumed to correspond to the whole is ontologically subordinate to the dimension of reality that is left out. Φρονεῖν consists in seeing things as they really are; missing that which really is entirely is anything but φρονεῖν. One can only understand φρονεῖν in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

The fact that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the seat of οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα has even further consequences for the displacement of the normal version of reality as φρονεῖν. Each soul tries to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. For the gods, the journey is easy: they fly upwards to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, contemplate the beings that exist there and they go back home. For non-divine souls, the journey presents several difficulties. They strive upwards, but are also pulled downwards. And even those that are successful can only get a glimpse of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. Their effort to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος can have different results. The souls that are able to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and have a look at the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα will carry on following the gods through the sky in a cyclical fashion. The souls that fail to do this fall down to earth and are imprisoned inside a body. This accounts for our current *de facto* situation as inhabitants of earth: our souls have fallen from the sky, because of our failure to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. We are, in other words, victims of an air crash and have become stranded on earth, castaways from the absolute journey in which we, in our winged and airborne condition, were engaged.

But the role of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is more than just as the seat of reality, so to speak. It is the superlative goal, that towards which all souls are direct, that which all

souls hunger for. That is to say that there is a fundamental component of desire involved in the journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. More than that: striving to achieve the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος corresponds to an absolute form of vital orientation. And this is a form of vital orientation that is not only radically different from the ones that are endorsed and prescribed by the socially shared perspective, but that may often be, as we shall see, be completely at odds with what is usually understood as a person's self-interest.

The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, however, remains the goal towards which every soul strives, even after the fall. It is, in other words, the aim of the pressure that determines the life of each ψυχή. The significance of this should not be understated. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not only the foremost of all targets – it is, in the economy of the palinode, the only *real* target. While in their airbone and winged state, the human ψυχαί are engaged in the same journey as the gods – and journey to and from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. That is what defines their life. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the *terminus ad quem* towards which they move, to the exclusion of all other conceivable *termini*. And yet, life here on earth, life as we known it, does not seem to be defined by a single *terminus ad quem*, but rather by a multiplicity and diversity of goals. This, however, as the palinode tells us, is a mistake. In reality, there is one goal, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. All the other apparent goals only appear as such as the result of the fall of the ψυχαί, a fall that interrups the normal cycle of journeys to and from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and creates an enormous distance between the ψυχαί and their goal.

The goals and forms of vital orientation that populate the souls' lives ἐνθάδε lose their significance in this new conception of φρονεῖν. As we shall see in detail, they become mere substitutes of the only real and proper gold. Under this new conception, it is not φρόνιμος to pursue those goals. Rather, what this conception of φρονεῖν entails is the adoption of forms of vital orientation that were usually deemed mad, such as the lover's, for example. These, in fact, are shown to actually be closer to φρονεῖν (even though not entirely φρόνιμος) than the ones prescribed or endorsed by the socially shared perspective.

Our current *de facto* situation, according to the palinode, is of fallen souls, souls that failed to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and have lost their ability to fly towards it. Our *de facto* situation is one marked by a very significant and seemingly insurmountable distance from the beings that really are. The greater the distance, the further one is from

being able to rightly claim to be in possession of φρονεῖν, since, according to the myth, the simple fact that we are living ἐνθάδε implies that we were unable to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and see the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα.

The fall is accompanied by λήθη, a forgetfulness that makes the previous vision of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα fade away. It is because of the presence of λήθη that the fall is not followed by an active, overwhelming and obvious feeling of lack and deprivation. One has lost direct access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and direct access to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα – but now one has also forgotten there was even such a thing as the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. One might be stranded far away from the *terminus ad quem* of one's existence, but the very existence of that *terminus ad quem* is shrouded in λήθη. One might no longer be able to access directly reality as such, but one is not aware of that lack, since one has forgotten the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. In the previous airborne state, the ψυχή yearned and demanded access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα – now it cannot make such demands, because it has forgotten. Λήθη causes a substantial contraction in what the ψυχή demands, causing it to go after goals that pale in comparison to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and to accept as real beings that are far from the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα.

Judging from this description, one would think that we would be considered absolutely deprived of φρονεῖν. If φρονεῖν is dependant on the contemplation of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα and if our *de facto* situation has as its main cause our inability to do so, one would obviously infer that φρονεῖν is something that does not belong to us in the slightest. This, however, is not what Socrates says. We might be the souls that failed to see the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, but seeing the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is said to be a *condicio sine qua non* for becoming a human being[315]. This means that the simple fact that we are human beings could only be possible if, at some stage, we were able to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The failure that immediately caused our fall had to be preceded by successful journeys to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. So we have had, in some way, some kind of access to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα.

The access to οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is constitutive of our point of view. In the case of the souls that have not suffered a fall, this access is direct. They get at least a glimpse of it when they reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. In the case of the fallen souls, the situation

[315] 249b4: "οὐ γὰρ ἥ γε μήποτε ἰδοῦσα τὴν ἀλήθειαν εἰς τόδε ἥξει τὸ σχῆμα [sc. as a human being]." Also, 249e4: "καθάπερ γὰρ εἴρηται, πᾶσα μὲν ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴ φύσει τεθέαται τὰ ὄντα".

is different. Although catastrophic, the fall does not sever every connection to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. A lifeline remains, or, better yet, an umbilical cord. The soul may be stuck a level below its usual habitat, even more below the *terminus ad quem* of its journey, but it is still connected to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα through memory, or, to be more specific, the peculiar kind of hindered memory that corresponds to ἀνάμνησις. In some way, in our current fallen situation, we are not entirely deprived of some degree of φρονεῖν, albeit in a lesser degree than the one possessed when our souls could look upon the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. So there is always a *quantum minimum* of ἀλήθεια, to compensate, to a certain point, the presence of λήθη. The notions of φρονεῖν and οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, as formal notions, remain active and in place. But the way they are deformalized, the content that is assigned to these formal notions does not correspond to the status attributed to them.

This introduces complexity to our understanding of φρονεῖν. We are no longer talking about a simple attestation of the quality of our point of view, taking as our standard the normal, socially endorsed version of reality. As the ontological landscape becomes more complex, so does the notion of φρονεῖν. The degrees of proximity and distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the quality of our access to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα are the fundamental criteria to assess a point of view as φρόνιμος or not[316]. The fact that the line that connects us to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is never severed, that, in some way, there is always still some kind of connection to it, means that, in our condition as fallen souls, we retain some *quantum minimum* of φρονεῖν. However, the fact that this *quantum minimum* depends on a connection to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα disqualifies as φρόνιμος the version of reality normally held – a version that does not acknowledge the existence of οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα or is even open to the possibility that the beings it normally deals with are, in some way, ontologically subordinate to some other kind of being. This applies to the socially shared perspective, to the perspective that is shared by all of us – which means that the normal attribution of φρονεῖν to each and every one of us is at least questionable. All

[316] These factors of limitation correlate with the different degrees of proximity and distance to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. By degrees of proximity and distance we do not mean the relative geographical – or, in this case, ouranographical – position of the souls at each moment of each cyclical journey that constitutes their existence. The simple fact that the journeys towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος are multiple and cyclical implies that, for each journey towards it, there is a journey away from it. This is said explicitly about the gods (247e2) and the same can be inferred about the non-divine souls who remain winged, since they are said to follow the gods (247a2). If this is the case, the simple geographical position of one specific soul will be irrelevant to determine its nature and relation with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The degrees of proximity and distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος are not measured in how far away the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is at each moment; it is rather ascertained by how easily a soul can reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

human beings are affected by this, since the perspective introduced by the palinode is completely new to everyone. What the palinode suggests is that, *stricto sensu*, no one is φρόνιμος.

1.4. A different understanding of the divine

From a cursory reading of the palinode, one would be forced to conclude that the traditional Homeric gods figure prominently in the myth. We find plenty of references to gods like Zeus, Hera or Ares. The attributes associated are not very different from the traditional understanding of these gods. Zeus is described as "μέγας ἡγεμὼν ἐν οὐρανῷ" (246e4); Hera is regal; Ares is utterly violent[317]. They are, like in traditional myths, placed above human beings in power and dignity. However, despite maintaining these characteristics, the palinode introduces radical changes to the understanding of the gods and the divine.

We have already had opportunity to discuss one of these important changes. This change precedes the section of the palinode regarding erotic μανία. In fact, it precedes the palinode itself and serves not only as one of its fundamental thesis but also as its cause: the thesis that sustains that the divine cannot be κακόν[318]. If this is the case, the previous speeches, by Lysias and Socrates, were not only mistaken, but also blasphemous. Socrates' palinode is his way of expiating this blasphemy and escaping punishment. This,

[317] The Homeric gods, as observed by VILATTE (Une mutation religieuse au IVe siècle: les dieux du « Phèdre » de Platon: entre la nature et le lieu hyperouranien des essences, *Revue Belge de Philologie et Histoire* 77 (1999), 53-75), first appear in group, in the traditional number of twelve, as part of the procession of souls (246e4ff.). Zeus is from the start given a prominent role as leader of the procession (246e4ff.). Another traditional Homeric god is also mentioned at this point in the palinode, albeit explicitly outside the divine procession, Hestia (247a2). See STALLBAUM, *ad locum*; THOMPSON, *ad locum*, HACKFORTH, 72ff.; DE VRIES, *ad locum*, ROWE, *ad locum*; SALA, 171; YUNIS, *ad locum*. On the other hand, one could argue the traditional gods first appear a bit earlier, when Socrates deconstructs and rejects the traditional conception of the gods as anthropomorphic beings composed of body and soul (246c4ff.). Apart from Zeus and Hestia, no other traditional god is designated by name or assigned any individual characteristic at this point. In fact, the procession is a generic description of the divine ψυχαί and their way of life, in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and in contrast with the non-divine souls. The traditional Homeric gods are only mentioned again much later (252c4ff.), already in the context of the analysis of the role of ἔρως in the recovering of the soul's wings and its return to the absolute journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Even then only four gods are named: Zeus (252c4, 252e1ff., 253a5ff.) Ares (252c5), Hera (253b1ff.) and Apollo (253b2ff.) – and the last one appears only as a name. Even if these gods display some of the traditional characteristics usually assigned to them, the role they play is, however, very different. They do not intervene directly – if at all. Those characteristics are relevant only insofar as they provide a model for the ἐραστής' attempt to return to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, a specific angle of approach to the *terminus ad quem* of every need and desire.

[318] 242e2: "εἰ δ' ἔστιν, ὥσπερ οὖν ἔστι, θεὸς ἤ τι θεῖον ὁ Ἔρως, οὐδὲν ἂν κακὸν εἴη". See chapter IV, p. 283ff., especially p. 285f., n. 226, above.

however, is not just a mere religious ploy to escape punishment from the gods. Saying that ἔρως is bad is not just blasphemous because it offends a divine being; it is also blasphemous because it is untrue. This is not a cause of being under the power of an evil or immoral tyrant that demands from his subjects that they recognize him as benevolent; it is rather the case of a kind and wise ruler that has been slandered and can rightly and justly punish the slanderer. Even if Socrates could escape his punishment in some way, he would still have committed blasphemy and said something that was not true. The gods are good, they cannot be considered responsible for anything bad that happens to human beings.

However, even if Phaedrus does not dispute this thesis, this does not mean that it corresponds to a commonly held belief about the gods. To understand the gods as wholly benevolent does not seem to agree with a great and rich tradition within Greek religious thinking. This tradition understands the gods is the capricious and unpredictable superhuman lords that mortals must please. That this is not the only way the gods were conceived is a matter we have already addressed previously. But even if the view of the gods as benevolent entities was not completely unprecedented in ancient Greek culture, the fact remains that stating this thesis outright, without any arguments to support, as if it were the most obvious thing in the world, constitutes a challenge to the more traditional view of the gods. What Socrates is putting forward is not a nuanced view; it is rather a forceful statement of a thesis that is not discussed at any point in the dialogue. To insist on the thesis that states the absolute benign character of the gods goes completely against the traditional view of the god Ἔρως as a god whose intervention in human life is generally the cause of suffering, ruin and hardship. If the gods are seen as benign beings, and Ἔρως is considered to be a god, then one cannot but conclude that ἔρως is somehow a blessing. This change in the conception of the gods will be reflected in the understanding of the three first forms of beneficial μανία.

The theology of the second part of the palinode, like its cosmology, has an anthropological focus. By this we mean that, as the cosmology serves as the context and framework of a story that tells us of the adventures and misadventures of the human ψυχαί, so does the theology of the palinode illuminates the condition of the human souls, by comparison and contrast. In the "traditional" theology, the lives of gods and humans mirror one another. To use Pindar's formulation, they are one γένος, born from the same

mother[319]. The traditional Greek gods are anthropomorphic, and are the bearers of whims and desires that are not that different from the ones humans have. The gods are, in a way, super-humans, or hyper-humans. They are more powerful, more beautiful, in one word, more perfect versions of human beings; or, if you will, human beings are degraded versions of gods. There is, in any case, a kinship between humans and gods, a common nature, in spite of all the differences. The common origin and the similarity between gods and humans only makes the difference between their conditions even more evident. The gods are, in Homeric terms, ῥεῖα ζώοντες[320]. They live a life of ease, a gilded life where everything comes easy. This is in stark contrast with the lives of human beings, which are filled with toil and hardship. The easy life of the gods, their beauty, their strength, their power, their immortality – all this emphasizes the hard existence human beings are forced to endure, their frailty, their vulnerability, their limitations, their mortality.

The theology of the second part of the palinode also emphasizes the kinship between humans and gods. This kinship, however, lies in something different from what we find in the traditional theology. Both humans and gods are understood as ψυχαί (246a4ff). The difference between mortal and immortal makes no sense in this theology: all ψυχαί are immortal, which means that human beings, themselves defined by their identity as ψυχαί, will be immortal[321]. But perhaps the most relevant element of kinship

[319] PINDAR, *Nemean* VI, 1-7: "ἓν ἀνδρῶν, ἓν θεῶν γένος· ἐκ μιᾶς δὲ πνέομεν / ματρὸς ἀμφότεροι· διείργει δὲ πᾶσα κεκριμένα / δύναμις, ὡς τὸ μὲν οὐδέν, ὁ δὲ χάλκεος ἀσφαλὲς αἰὲν ἕδος / μένει οὐρανός. ἀλλά τι προσφέρομεν ἔμπαν ἢ μέγαν / νόον ἤτοι φύσιν ἀθανάτοις, / καίπερ ἐφαμερίαν οὐκ εἰδότες οὐδὲ μετὰ νύκτας ἄμμε πότμος / οἵαν τιν᾽ ἔγραψε δραμεῖν ποτὶ στάθμαν."

[320] "θεοὶ ῥεῖα ζώοντες": HOMER, *Iliad* VI, 138; *Odyssey* IV, 805; V, 122. Cf. *Phaedrus* 247b2-3: "ᾗ δὴ τὰ μὲν θεῶν ὀχήματα ἰσορρόπως εὐήνια ὄντα **ῥᾳδίως** πορεύεται, τὰ δὲ ἄλλα **μόγις**". The contrast between the ease with which the gods reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and the difficulties of the human souls in performing the same task is a recurring theme in the palinode. See infra, p. 437, n. 337.

[321] 245c5: "ψυχὴ πᾶσα ἀθάνατος." The formulation, however, is ambiguous, and its ambiguity resides in the meaning of the word πᾶσα, which can either be distributive (*every* soul) or collective (*all* soul). This ambiguity has been the subject of discussion since Antiquity, and the discussion continues to this day. Frutiger has shown that a strictly grammatical analysis is unable to solve this ambiguity (FRUTIGER, P., *Les Mythes de Platon*. Les mythes de Platon. Étude philosophique et littéraire, Paris, Alcan, 1930, 130ff.). The discussion that immediately follows this statement suggests that what might be at stake is ψυχή in its collective meaning. The ψυχῆς οὐσία καὶ λόγος (245e3) is described in "abstract" and general terms. This could be seen as an indication that Socrates is talking about a "world soul", i.e., as a soul different and above the individual souls mentioned in the palinode. There is no need to postulate the presence of such "world soul" in the economy of the palinode to explain the possible use of πᾶσα in its collective sense. Even if the immediate context suggests that the collective sense is the more likely, this in no way entails that the individual souls are not immortal. On the contrary, it becomes clear in the narration of the adventures and misadventures of the non-divine souls, in contrast with the souls of the gods, that immortality is as much an attribute of the former as it is of the latter. At the very least, the distinction between non-divine and divine souls does not lie on the presence or absence of this particular property. That being so, even if the argument of the immortality of the soul is not expressed in such a way as to apply to each individual soul, it is nonetheless strongly implied that it is. It is perhaps more likely, however, that,

between gods and humans resides in their relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The second part of the palinode places the gods in the sky, leading the procession, composed by the other souls, the human souls, towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος (with the single exception of Hestia)[322]. Gods and humans share a common nature: as winged souls in a journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. They share a *terminus ad quem*, a pressure towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. They are still the same γένος: the γένος of the ψυχαί whose life is determined by their relation with and yearning for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The difference, once again, resides in a contrast between ease and hardship. But this contrast is now understood in a completely different context. Since the life of both gods and men is spent in a journey to and from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, since their life is defined and determined by their yearning for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the contrast between ease and hardship will be understood in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

The gods are able to reach it with ease; humans have difficulties. This is a constitutive feature – and the main difference between them. All other differences derive from this one. In mythical terms, this difference is expressed by an apparently small but important difference in the constitution of divine and human ψυχαί. Every soul, be it divine or not, is said to be, in explicitly allegorical terms, a complex composed by a chariot with its charioteer and horses. This complex has wings[323]. The divine souls

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as HACKFORTH states: "the distinction between collective and distributive senses is not here before his [sc. Plato's] mind" and that "it is reasonable to believe – and indeed, since it is the individual soul that Socrates will be concerned with in the myth, we cannot avoid believing – that Plato regarded any demonstration of the immortality of 'soul' in general as applicable to individual souls" (64-65). See also: STALLBAUM, ad locum; THOMPSON, ad locum; COUVREUR, P. (ed.), *Hermiae Alexandrini in Platonis Phaedrum scholia*, Paris, Librairie Emile Bouillon, 1901, 102, 10; DE VRIES, ad locum; ROBINSON, T. M., Plato's Psychology, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1970, chapter 6; ROWE, ad locum; GRISWOLD, 84-85, 259 n13; NICHOLSON, 156-157; SALA, 150-151 (including notes); YUNIS, ad locum.

[322] 246e4ff.: "ὁ μὲν δὴ μέγας ἡγεμὼν ἐν οὐρανῷ Ζεύς, ἐλαύνων πτηνὸν ἅρμα, πρῶτος πορεύεται, διακοσμῶν πάντα καὶ ἐπιμελούμενος: τῷ δ᾽ ἕπεται στρατιὰ θεῶν τε καὶ δαιμόνων, κατὰ ἕνδεκα μέρη κεκοσμημένη. μένει γὰρ Ἑστία ἐν θεῶν οἴκῳ μόνη· τῶν δὲ ἄλλων ὅσοι ἐν τῷ τῶν δώδεκα ἀριθμῷ τεταγμένοι θεοὶ ἄρχοντες ἡγοῦνται κατὰ τάξιν ἣν ἕκαστος ἐτάχθη."

[323] The motive of the flying chariot has important antecedents in ancient Greek culture. The best known of them is perhaps the flying chariot that plays such a prominent role in Parmenides' poem: PARMENIDES; B1 DK. But winged chariots are also to be found in other texts, namely, EMPEDOCLES, B3 DK, 3-5; SAPPHO, fr. 1; PINDAR, *Ol.* VI, 22-26. This motive is also recurrent in the *Iliad*: V, 767-777; VIII, 41-52, 381-396; XIII, 23-38. The text strongly suggests that the whole complex that constitutes the soul has wings (246a7). The word "ὑποπτέρου" qualifies both "ζεύγους" and "ἡνιόχου". Cf. 251b7: "πᾶσα γὰρ ἦν τὸ πάλαι πτερωτή." See FRIEDLÄNDER, P., *Platon*, I, Berlin, de Gruyter, 1928, 205; ROBIN, XCVI n1; HACKFORTH, 69 n1; DUMORTIER, J., L' attelage ailé du Phèdre (246 sqq.), *Revue des Etudes Greques* 82 (1969), 246-248; HEITSCH, 97ff.; SALA, 156ff; SLAVEVA-GRIFFIN, SLAVEVA-GRIFFIN, S., Of gods, Philosophers, and Charioteers: Content and Form in Parmenides' Proem and Plato's Phaedrus, *Transactions and Proceeding of the American Philological Association* 133 (2003), 227-253; YUNIS, *ad* 246a6. On pictoral representations of flying or winged chariots, see SCHWEITZER, B., *Platon und die*

possess an unspecified number of horses; the non-divine souls possess two horses[324]. The divine souls' horses are all said to be of good and obedient nature. This is not the case of the non-divine souls: one of their horses is good and obedient; the other has the opposite nature. The non-divine souls follow the divine souls to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but struggle to reach it and, in some cases, as we have seen, they fail to do it. The divine souls reach it every time with ease and partake without any trouble of the vision of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. The gods, therefore, are presented as an always effective version of humans, as beings similar to humans, but that always succeed where humans are always at the risk of failing. Once we remember that we are fallen human souls, that we failed to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, this difference becomes even more pronounced. We once lived like gods, *with* the gods, and shared their journey to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. And now we are stranded down here on earth, so far away from the goal for which we have always yearned that we no longer even remember its existence.

The introduction of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος into this equation, however, has further consequences for the theology of the second part of the palinode. The simple fact that the myth places the third level above the normal dwelling of the gods already suggests, symbolically, that this level will be higher in importance and dignity. By placing the gods in the intermediate level, the sky, Socrates implicitly suggests that whatever is found in the top level will take precedence over them. The gods are, therefore, displaced from their traditional position as supreme beings. But they are also described in a way very different from the traditional conception – to the point of becoming almost unrecognizable. Their divine nature does not put them in the highest of all position. They are higher than human beings, but there is something even higher still. The gods are, in fact, gods so far as they possess a nature that allows them an unhindered access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and an untroubled, clear view of οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the true seat of the divine; the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is not only that which truly is, but also that which causes the gods to be gods (249c3ff.)[325]. The degree of proximity to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is the real criterion of divinity.

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bildende Kunst der Griechen, Tübingen, Niemeyer, 1953, 61ff.; HEITSCH, 98ff. See below, p. 438ff., especially p. 439, n 341.

[324] 246a6ff. See HACKFORTH, 69 n3; DE VRIES, *ad locum*; SALA, *ad locum*.

[325] "διὸ δὴ δικαίως μόνη πτεροῦται ἡ τοῦ φιλοσόφου διάνοια· πρὸς γὰρ ἐκείνοις ἀεί ἐστιν μνήμῃ κατὰ δύναμιν, **πρὸς οἷσπερ θεὸς ὢν θεῖός ἐστιν** [sc. τὰ ὄντα]." We will discuss this passage and its implications later on in this chapter.

1.5. A different understanding of possession

The traditional conceptions of ἔρως and μανία – which have already been challenged by Socrates in his first speech – rely heavily on the concept of κατοχή, possession. A phenomenon such as ἔρως would be seen as the result of the intervention of an overwhelming exterior force. This force would take possession of the person being attacked and exert control over his actions. The person attacked would be held by that exterior force, putting him or her in a position akin to slavery. A force capable of this can only be considered divine: a superior and somewhat mysterious force whose power people are vulnerable to. Such an understanding has the virtue of explaining the fact that people who are in love, as well as people commonly seen as being mad, act in such strange and, in many cases, self-destructive ways. It also accounts for the fact that they, in many cases, seem to have no control over themselves. According to these conceptions, sovereignty, control over oneself is, in a way, the default setting for any normal human being. Being under the power of such forces is an occasionally and temporary occurrence, not a permanent situation. This does not mean that human beings were to be considered as normally invulnerable to such dangers. Rather, the possibility of falling victim to such forces is always present. But the phenomenon itself would be seen as having been caused by the intervention of some exterior force that would disturb the normal sane ways of the one attacked. The causes of ἔρως and madness are transcendent and not immanent to the nature of the one who is in love or mad. The origin of these phenomena is to be found outside, not inside; they are exogenous, not endogenous.

This understanding of ἔρως and μανία as κατοχή, i.e., the occasional and temporary result of the intervention of an exterior force, was challenged by Socrates' first speech. In that speech, Socrates presents an understanding of ἔρως and μανία that attributes the cause of these phenomena to the particular constitution of human nature, not to an external force. It is as a result of this particular constitution, or, to be more precise, as a result of a constitutional dysfunction, that something like ἔρως can come about. It is still regarded as an occasional and temporary condition, but it is understood as endogenous. With the palinode, however, Socrates seems to go back to an exogenous account of the cause of these phenomena. In the first section of the palinode, Socrates explicitly attributes to the forms of beneficial μανία a divine origin. They are divine gifts.

These divine gifts assume a cognitive form: the receiver is given a specific form of knowledge that is considered useful either for the one receiving or, most likely, to the community. These gifts are given by the way of possession. A god takes hold of someone and uses that person as a vessel through which the divine gift is poured out. These instances of possession are similar to the ones regarding ἔρως and μανία in general, except that they are considered to be beneficial[326]. The one who is μαινόμενος is just a passive receiver of the madness bestowed upon him or her.

It is possible, and, in fact, likely, that the understanding of possession at stake in the second part of the palinode differs significantly from the one present in the first part. The second part of the palinode, however, only shows us one specific modality of possession, erotic possession. This specific form of possession, however, is an instance of a generic understanding of possession – possession by the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, i.e., by what is, in the perspective introduced by the second part of the palinode, the divine itself. However, it might be odd to talk about possession in this case. In fact, what becomes clear from the theological changes of the second part of the palinode is that the gods are no longer directly intervening in the life of humans, except as guides in their journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. In this context, there seems to be very little room for possession in anything that might resemble the traditional conception of this phenomenon. In the world presented to us by the second part of the palinode, ἔρως is not the result of an intervention by the gods, be it beneficial or harmless. In this sense, it is not a form of possession, nor is its cause exogenous. Ἔρως only takes place in those souls that have suffered the fall. They are now imprisoned in a body and maimed, having lost their wings, i.e., their ability to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

And yet, human beings are still described as being dominated by a superior force, a possession of sorts. As we have mentioned before, the connection with the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is not completely severed. There always remains some kind of link to it, however tenuous it may be. When one falls in love, this link makes itself felt more strongly. The one who is in love is strongly but unclearly reminded of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. It recovers the desire to reach it, the longing to contemplate the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. The new

[326] This is clearly so in the first section of the palinode regarding beneficial μανία. However, it is unclear how, according to this model, one is supposed to understand the forms of μανία that are not beneficial and, therefore, not caused by divine intervention. By restricting the attribution of divine origin to the forms of μανία that are beneficial, Socrates implicitly suggests that some sort of endogenous cause is assumed.

holder of the title of divine, the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, is the entity that is at the origin of erotic μανία. In a sense, it takes possession of the one who is in love. His life is dominated by this desire. This, however, is not done as previously imagined: as if an intelligent being exerted control over us and led us towards a beloved. Rather, the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα takes control of the one who is in love through the overwhelming desire reignited when ἔρως is awakened. This desire is a fundamental characteristic of the soul in its condition before the fall. Before the fall, the soul needs and wants something that is outside itself, beyond the place of its dwelling, and strives to reach that. After the fall, this desire becomes dormant and almost forgotten; it remains like that until ἔρως is ignited.

This peculiar form of possession is only possible because the soul is constituted in the mode of desiring the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Being dominated by something above, by the superlative that is the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, is a constitutive feature of every soul, including each and every human soul. It is thus, so to speak, an endogenous form of possession. Each human soul is constitutively possessed by the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος – or, to be more precise, by the soul's constitutive yearning for and pressure towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The whole of human existence is a constitutive κατοχή.

This understanding of possession will seem quite peculiar when compared with the traditional understanding: this is a possession that is endogenous, and, at the same time, permanent. What the second part of the palinode says about possession is that human souls are constitutively possessed, that they are always possessed. This is their default condition. The oddity of this should not be overlooked. What started as an occasional and temporary condition caused by an external force now becomes a permanent state caused by one's own constitution. In fact, the notion of κατοχή presented in the second part of the palinode reads like the opposite of the traditional notion, to the point of it becoming almost unrecognisable. And yet, we are dealing with the same phenomenon – but seen from a completely different angle, within a radically different ontological, anthropological and theological framework.

It is from this radically changed angle that the desire for the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα ignited by ἔρως that takes place in our fallen condition is now understood. The yearning for the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα was dormant as a result of the fall; something has to take place in order to reignite it. In order for the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα to take possession of our soul this peculiar sense, it needs something to exacerbate the dormant connection it maintains

with the fallen soul. This happens, according to the palinode, when one falls in love with someone. When one falls in love, one is intensely and overwhelmingly reminded of one of the beings seen in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος: κάλλος[327]. In this situation, the desire seems to be directed towards the beloved. In reality, the beloved appears as beauty itself, beauty incarnate. Beauty itself, on the other hand, is the filter through which one sees the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the particular angle through which one is able to access it somehow. In reality, the beloved is just the trigger that ignites an intense connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through the form of beauty. The connection is with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος – not with the beloved himself, or even with just beauty. It is the result of this connection, triggered by the sight of the beloved that provokes all the odd behaviour and lack of control commonly attributed to a possession by a god. It is a form of possession, nonetheless: not by a god that does with the one possessed whatever he wills, but rather a possession by a yearning that results from the soul's own nature as a being constituted towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα.

From this description of ἔρως as a form of possession in the peculiar perspective of the second part of the palinode, one would be led to believe that this is still an occasional and temporary phenomenon. This would happen only when one falls in love – or, at most, undergoes some other exceptional circumstances with similar effects. Most of the time, one would not be possessed. This, however, is a misunderstanding – a misunderstanding that ignores one other important element: λήθη. The fallen souls are heavily determined by λήθη. This applies especially to the understanding the fallen souls have of their condition as fallen souls. This λήθη masks the fact that the aim of every yearning is the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the superlative of superlatives. This λήθη weakens the intensity of this yearning, which is channelled to other aims. It is because of λήθη that we do not live our lives in a state of permanent, restless and painful longing for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and that the deprivation we now suffer from direct contact with it is not the cause of intense and unbearable suffering. Λήθη cradles us and rocks us to sleep, singing us a lullaby when what we really need and desire is the music of the spheres. But even if forgotten, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is still the decisive factor. Every other aim, goal, object of desire is nothing more than a pale substitute of the true *terminus ad quem*.

[327] 249d3ff: "ἔστι δὴ οὖν δεῦρο ὁ πᾶς ἥκων λόγος περὶ τῆς τετάρτης μανίας—ἣν ὅταν τὸ τῇδέ τις ὁρῶν κάλλος, τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ἀναμιμνησκόμενος, πτερῶταί τε καὶ ἀναπτερούμενος προθυμούμενος ἀναπτέσθαι κτλ.". See also: 250b5, 250d7ff.

This is why κατοχή is constitutive, why it defines and determines human nature at every single moment. Even when one is not affected by such a powerful and overwhelming phenomenon as ἔρως, one is still being possessed by ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, one is still being determined by the divine itself. What makes a phenomenon of κατοχή such as ἔρως seem exceptional is the fact that it constitutes a situation in which the connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος becomes more intense, where the veil of λήθη weakens and loses some of its soothing power. From the perspective of those who do not know their own condition as fallen souls, stranded away from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, falling in love might appear as an exceptional instance of possession by an external force; but, in reality, it is just an intensification of a constitutive determination.

1.6. A different understanding of the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition

The notion of φρονεῖν, as a formal notion, simply means: to see things as they really are, to have an effective recognition of reality. The notion of μανία, again as a formal notion, is the opposite of that: to have a distorted view of reality. These two formal notions, however, is not what we usually deal with. In fact, the notions of μανία and φρονεῖν are usually found already deformalized, given a specific content. The notion of φρονεῖν as usually assimilated to a socially shared perspective: to see things as they really are is to see things as the community I am a member of sees it. The idea of a socially shared perspective is still relatively formal. Different communities, at different times and places may and will assign different content to the socially shared perspective. This means that those different communities will possible have differing recognitions of reality. So a socially shared perspective will be made up of a complex network of theses, some, if not most, inexplicit. They will be held as valid implicitly, and will form, determine and shape the way each individual member of the community sees reality. This results in an assimilation between the φρονεῖν as the formal notion of a perspective that sees reality as it really is and this specific perspective. This specific perspective will not be seen as one possible way of deformalizing φρονεῖν, but rather as φρονεῖν itself. It becomes canonical, a standard of φρονεῖν. Each member of the community will be considered φρόνιμος inasmuch as he or she conforms to this perspective, as well as insofar as he or she is able to navigate through life in such a way that conforms to that person's self-interest. By the same token, he or she will be seen as μαινόμενος if he or she for some reason fails to

conform to the standard of φρονεῖν set through the socially shared perspective, and navigates through life in such a way that is opposed to that person's self-interest. This deformalized notion of φρονεῖν forms a bubble – whatever is outside it will be μανία. Φρονεῖν and μανία are therefore understood as polar opposites. You can either have one or the other – and in order to have φρονεῖν, you must see reality according to the socially shared perspective. Μανία will come from outside the enclosed territory of φρονεῖν (as defined by the specific socially shared perspective) and turn it upside down. Μανία is the threat that comes from without to destroy the place you already inhabit, φρονεῖν.

As we have had the opportunity to see before, the change of reality framework operated by the palinode causes a change in this understanding of φρονεῖν. The usual relation between commonly held beliefs and φρονεῖν can no longer be held once we realize that those same commonly held beliefs fail to describe reality as it really is. This opens up a gap between the concept of φρονεῖν as such and the particular kind of socially shared perspective that is usually considered to be φρόνιμος.

In correlation to this displacement of φρονεῖν, the understanding of μανία becomes more complex. We are no longer dealing with a clear-cut opposition between φρονεῖν, identified as the normal, socially shared and pragmatically competent point of view, and μανία as an aberration of that. Rather, the understanding of the opposition between φρονεῖν and μανία in the palinode has more to do with a scale of proximity and distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. At the top of this scale we find the gods unrestricted and easy access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and consequent contemplation of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα (247a7ff.). Below that we find different degrees of access to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα by the non-divine souls in their pre-fall condition (247b3ff., and especially 248a1ff.). The link with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not severed with the fall, but it can admit several degrees as well. Socrates describes these degrees in terms the different activities or ways of life, from the philosopher to the tyrant. Below the tyrant, we can find animals and other sorts of beings (248c2ff.). These seem to constitute the bottom of the scale. This scale is correlated with another – though implicit – scale: a scale of wings. By this we mean the different conditions in which the wings are described throughout the palinode, which are correlated with different degrees of proximity and distance to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος[328].

[328] The wings, as both the essential instruments of the souls' upwards motion and the symbol of the inverted

The scale of degrees of φρονεῖν suggest that we are no longer dealing with a binary opposition between φρονεῖν and μανία. We are rather dealing with a spectrum. One can be more or less φρόνιμος, more or less μαινόμενος. One should note, however, that Plato does not use the word μανία to describe the inferior degrees of this scale. Neither does he call the direct contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος φρονεῖν. However, if φρονεῖν consists in seeing reality as it really is, the mere fact that you are presenting an alternative and radically different cosmology, theology and anthropology, and claiming that they are true, will have significant implications for the deformalisation of the notions of φρονεῖν and μανία. One is now told that the version of reality that was generally taken as rendering reality as it really is, the socially shared perspective, actually fails in that regard. This specific socially shared perspective will, therefore, not be φρόνιμος.

That is the implication; there is no need for Plato to spell it out for us. If the perspective introduced in the second part of the palinode were still using a binary model to understand the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition, then we would be forced to conclude that if φρονεῖν consists in the direct contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, then anything that fails to reach such high standards would perhaps be best described as μανία. But the fact that the opposition is understood in terms of a scale shows that one can be "more" or "less" φρόνιμος. This implies, also, that one can be "more" or "less" μαινόμενος. The closer one is to the bottom of it, the more μαινόμενος one could be considered. There is μανία, i.e., a distortion of our point of view that prevents it from seeing reality as it really is, even if not under that name – a μανία *in re*, though not *in nomine*. But this μανία is no longer just the negative opposite of φρονεῖν, a darkening and deforming of our point of view's usually sane access to reality. As one regresses further and further away from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, one's point of view becomes more and more μαινόμενος, in this sense, without, however, losing that *quantum minimum* of φρονεῖν that constitutively defines human beings. Owing to our condition of fallen souls, our starting position in this scale is in one of the intermediate degrees. From the start of our earthly existence, we are in a situation of restricted φρονεῖν, affected by a certain degree of μανία. Human beings are in essence μαινόμενοι beings, which, however, maintain a fundamental connection to

gravity that attracts them towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, go through different stages of development, growth, mutilation and decay throughout the palinode. The significance of these different stages and how they correlate with the scale of proximity and distance will be discussed later on in this chapter.

what makes them φρόνιμοι, albeit in a limited degree. In this sense, human beings are both μαινόμενοι and φρόνιμοι.

This μανία *in re*, so to speak, differs from what is normally considered μανία. The latter is the aberration from the norm established by a socially shared perspective canonised as φρονεῖν. The μανία *in re*, on the other hand, is that same socially shared perspective, but seen from a point of view that has a radically different attribution of φρονεῖν. In the "traditional" conception, anything that deviates from that norm would be considered a form of μανία. This includes any of what we nowadays would consider to be mental illness, but also the kind of perspective that, like ἔρως and φιλοσοφία, actually correspond, according to the palinode, to approximations to the true φρονεῖν.

The new understanding of φρονεῖν introduced in the second part of the palinode alters this scenario radically. What was before considered to be φρονεῖν is now μανία – and a μανία that distorts reality, just like what we would nowadays classify as mental illness. When using the direct contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as the standard of φρονεῖν, the differences between this μανία *in re* and the μανία that we would equate with the modern concept of mental illness is blurred to the point of irrelevance. From the point of view of the true φρονεῖν introduced in the second part of the palinode, there is more that unites the traditional interpretations of φρονεῖν and μανία than what keeps them apart. They will share a same basic recognition of reality: one that does not include the fundamental identification of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as the seat of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα and as the *terminus ad quem* of every form of attachment. They will even share the same kind of "subjective" experience, so to speak. The μανία *in re*, i.e., what is normally identified as φρονεῖν, is a μανία that is lived as if it were φρονεῖν, that is incapable of recognising itself as μανία. In this it does not differ in the slightest from the formal notion of μανία: it is typical of μανία to be opaque to itself, to not be aware of itself as μανία, and to be experienced as φρονεῖν. Rather, it looks down upon perspectives that are actually closer to φρονεῖν as if those were forms of μανία.

That seems to be the case of the two phenomena that are actually denominated throughout the second part of the palinode as forms of μανία: ἔρως and φιλοσοφία. In a way, this seems to contradict what we have described above. If the mark of φρονεῖν is the proximity to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and the degree of access to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, then the more distant one is to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and the lower the degree of access,

the more one is to be considered μαινόμενος. But ἔρως and φιλοσοφία are described as phenomena that put one closer to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through either a consistent and clearer form of ἀνάμνησις, in the case of φιλοσοφία, or through a confused but violently intense form of ἀνάμνησις, like in the case of ἔρως. We therefore seem to be dealing with a contradictory view that puts two phenomena of relative approximation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as forms of μανία, while attributing φρονεῖν to modes of life that, in the scale of proximity to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, are clearly assigned to a lower position.

By singling out these two phenomena as μανικοί, Socrates seems to be using the normal conception of φρονεῖν as his standard. They are obviously μανικοί from the point of view of those who ignore the truths he has revealed to us in the second part of the palinode. Convinced of the φρόνιμος character of the point of view they possess, the ones who know nothing about what Socrates has revealed to us will necessary look upon the way the philosopher and the lover behaved and consider them to be μαινόμενοι. The philosopher rejects what Socrates describes as τὰ ἀνθρώπινα σπουδάσματα, in opposition to the divine undertakings he employs his life in[329]. But the recognition of the σπουδάσματα rejected by the philosopher as merely ἀνθρώπινα already presupposes the changed perspective introduced by the myth of the palinode. The undertakings of the philosopher, from the point of view of most people, will not appear to be ἀνθρώπινα, but less than ἀνθρώπινα. They will look upon it and judge it to be the result of a deranged mind.

Something similar could be said about the lover: his behaviour is odd, by the standards of normality. But the case of the lover has an additional complication. The condition of being in love is characterized by different forms of confusion and obscurity. The lover fails to recognize the true object of his desire as one of the forms that inhabit the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, beauty. He is convinced that the beloved is the actual *terminus ad quem* of his desire. Furthermore, he, at least at the start, establishes an intense anamnetic connection to a single form, beauty. This provides a very limited and partial access to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, severely restricting his degree of φρονεῖν. But, perhaps most important of all for the understanding of ἔρως as μανικός, the lover himself will still be somehow attached to the normal socially approved conceptions and understandings

[329] 249d1ff.: "ἐξιστάμενος δὲ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων σπουδασμάτων καὶ πρὸς τῷ θείῳ γιγνόμενος, νουθετεῖται μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν ὡς παρακινῶν, ἐνθουσιάζων δὲ λέληθεν τοὺς πολλούς."

that are usually associated with φρονεῖν. Unlike the philosopher, that already regards these conceptions as at the very least susceptible to revision, the lover is immediately transported from the peaceful situation of someone content with his version of reality, to one who suffers from an incredibly intense anamnetic connection to the form of beauty, that, however, is not at first recognized as such. This makes the situation of the lover difficult to understand even for himself, therefore making possible that he will see himself as being μαινόμενος.

Both the lover and the philosopher will be intensely aware of the disconnection between their current perspectives and the ones that are usually considered to be φρόνιμοι. Both will suffer, in different degrees, from this awareness. Like all human beings, they are caught in the middle of spectrum of φρονεῖν that mixes φρονεῖν with μανία; but they will be, albeit in different ways, more aware of this constitutive conflict in human nature. And the more intensely this conflict is felt, the more one will consider oneself, and be judged by other, as being μαινόμενος.

2. The statements of the second part of the palinode and their meaning

The reading and interpretation of a text such as the palinode presents multiple problems. In a first instance, these problems are similar to the ones that affect the reading of any philosophical text, and, especially, those philosophical texts that constitute the *corpus platonicum*. But the palinode and, especially, the section of the palinode we are currently dealing with present a different additional set of interpretative problems.

Many of these problems are related to the mythical trappings of this text. In contrast with the rhetorical devices employed in the previous speeches, the palinode makes extensive use of mythical and poetical language. Socrates seems to abandon the "philosophical" language employed in his first speech and does not choose to embrace the language of the λόγοι ἐρωτικοί, as it is parodied by Lysias. On the contrary, Socrates chooses a language that is pregnant of religious and poetic terms and allusions. Furthermore, he does not start *in medias res*, like Lysias. He decides to tell a story, just like he did in his first speech, but this story is different. This story includes within itself one or several other stories. But these stories, in contrast to the one told in his first speech, are actually myths, with gods and flying carriages and marvellous places. The abundant

use of such motives causes difficulties in the interpretation of this text and forces us to make some choices.

Faced with the task of reading a text like this, one has several options. One of them, probably not altogether unreasonable, is to dismiss it as complete nonsense, or, in the very least, as just a clever use of language without any philosophical value. The use of mythical language, the assertion of statements of mythical nature would disqualify this text and deprive it of any relevant meaning. This perspective only accepts as having philosophical value those kinds of speech that make concrete and systematic use of arguments, therefore disqualifying the second part of the palinode almost entirely. A reading of the palinode would still be possible, but would just pay attention to its literary, cultural or historical value, giving no regard to the statements one would be able to find therein. If we were to accept such view, we would have to abstain from even considering the palinode and, in the extreme, a large portion of the *corpus platonicum*, as sources of any kind of philosophical statements.

The mythical form adopted in this text can, nevertheless, be seen under a different light. Instead of dismissing it from the start, one might try to read within and through all the mythology in an attempt to extract any philosophically relevant meaning. This is only possible if we assume from the start that myth, at least in this case, can be seen as a peculiar mode of expressing a way of understanding something, a mode of transmitting a specific perspective. This specific mode of expression, however, is somehow shrouded and requires uncovering and deciphering in order to be fully understood. Our mission, therefore, would be to produce this deciphering, to turn this obscure form of expression into something clearer and easier to understand.

In doing so, however, one must not forget that we are dealing with a multifaceted text. It is, obviously, a retraction from what Socrates has said in his previous speech. It is an apology for the wrong done and an expiation of the blasphemy committed. It is an epideictic speech, in the form of an ἐγκώμιον of ἔρως. But this speech also employs in its core an aetiological myth. The myth provides us with a causal explanation of a specific set of phenomena. The phenomenon explicitly at stake in the palinode is ἔρως; or, to be more specific, the thesis that Socrates argues for is the one that states that ἔρως, albeit a form of μανία, is one of the greatest blessings for mankind.

But this is an outlandish assertion, so contrary to the dominant perspective, that, in order to reasonably and persuasively sustain it, Socrates has to present a heavily modified perspective on reality. Thinking of ἔρως as a blessing, and *a fortiori* as one of the greatest blessings, is incompatible with the perspective commonly held about reality and the human condition in this specific cultural context. The aetiological myth that, as a rhetorical device, tries to explain ἔρως as a blessing also has to provide a radically different perspective on just about everything. By trying to explain the highly beneficial role erotic μανία plays in human life, Socrates ends up providing a cause that accounts for *de facto* human condition. This shows us, however, that the purpose of the speech might be vaster than it claims to be. The revision of the notion of ἔρως – and, by extension, of the notion of μανία, since ἔρως is understood as a kind of μανία – drags with it a global revision of ὑποθέσεις. This revision is global in the true sense of the word: it requires the mobilisation of ὑποθέσεις concerning not only of human nature, but also of the whole of reality. In this sense, the myth of the palinode is a myth not just about ἔρως, or μανία, or even human nature. It is a myth about everything.

In order to understand this, however, we must confront another problem: the fact that the very status of the statements of this part of the palinode are open to question. Taken at its facial value, Socrates' statements would show us that there actually is such a thing as the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, which is actually the seat of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, that we had a previous "life" as winged airborne souls, travelling to and from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, following a procession of gods, and so on and so forth. In other words, one could deal with the second part of the palinode as if it were actually enjoining us to take it at face value, as an accurate and literal description of reality, of human condition, as a revelation of the true configuration of reality, so radically different from how it is usually recognised, and of which we have had no notice until now. Considering that no evidence of the veracity of those statements is presented, we would be forced to take Socrates at his own word, which is a risky business, considering the Socratic propensity to use myth, irony, and even fallacies to make a point. Regardless, however, of the possibility of the statements not being literally true, it is possible to take them up in a productive and instructive way. Even if we were to suspend our judgement regarding their veracity, or even deny it altogether, we may still look upon this set of statements as shedding light on some phenomena.

Unless we assume that it is the result of some kind of revelation, the myth must consist in an attempt of causal explanation for a phenomenon or set of phenomena already identified and interpreted by Socrates. In this sense, the myth will be an *illustrans*, the *illustratum* of which is our *de facto* human condition. This implies a diagnosis of our *de facto* condition, an understanding of that of which the aetiological explanation is an explanation. The relation between aetiology and condition is not one of necessity. The aetiological explanation tries to explain this specific set of phenomena, more or less successfully, but the phenomena that are to be explained can be interpreted and analysed independently of the aetiological explanation. This means that it is possible to read the myth not as a mythical causal explanation – nor even as a mythical causal explanation requiring allegorical interpretation – but simply as a description of our *de facto* condition[330].

When read under these terms, the myth of the palinode appears as a complex of theses dressed up in mythical garbs. One needs only to look under the palinode's mythical tunic to have a glimpse of what Socrates is trying to say about our *de facto* condition. Lifting up the tunic is not, however, an easy task; it is rather full of difficulties, the difficulty of understanding the meaning of the mythical trappings and how they actually relate to what they are trying to say about our *de facto* condition not being the least. But the fact that the mythical trappings wore by this text are apparently so novel and bizarre when compared to what remains of ancient Greek poetry and myth makes this whole task all the more difficult. It is true that we can find parallels, similarities and affinities with other Greek texts, but these provide us limited help when trying to understand the incredible complexity of this text. There are whole worlds of mythology one has little or no access to and there is an ocean of historical and cultural differences between the ancient Greeks and us. The truth is that, regardless of how much scholarly work one puts in the "deciphering" of this instance of mythical writing, one is always left lacking. Since this distance is insurmountable, one has no choice but to integrate these problems into the interpretation itself, by taking them into account and considering any interpretation as tentative at the best.

This, however, implies that the interpretation one is trying to achieve has a very specific purpose: to explain what the text really means, beneath all its mythical form of

[330] See p. 389, above.

expression. The deciphering of the mythical aspects of the text would, in this case, reveal to us its true, unhidden meaning. This seems to be a reasonable assumption. However, it leaves us with a very important question that needs an urgent answer: what are we aiming at when we try to reveal what the text really means? In other words: what hidden meaning are we trying to reach through all this interpretative work? The most obvious answer to this question is: whatever the author was trying to tell us. In other words, what we are trying to reach is precisely that which the author, Plato in this case, meant. Our work would be to reveal Plato's thoughts on these subjects, analyse his theses and catalogue his opinions. Our work would then be of a doxographic nature. It would consist of a description, ideally completely accurate and exhaustive, of the multiplicity of theses sustained by the author on the subjects we are currently dealing with. This, however, is quite problematic, especially when applied to an author like Plato, who does so much and goes to such considerable lengths to hide himself. Owing to the particular characteristics of the *corpus platonicum*, the cultural and historical distance that separates us from it, the variety of its statements, the problematic status of many of its theses, the sometimes blatant contradictions, an accurate and exhaustive doxography, even of just a fragment like the palinode, becomes a herculean task.

In addition to these difficulties, which could perhaps be overcome with time, work and attention, there is another one, much more serious. Doxography implies that it is possible to interpret a text in such a way that one is put before its meaning in all its purity, exempt from any changes operated by the interpretation itself. In ideal terms, the doxographer would be a reader of the text that is free from his own interpretative biases, who would be a perfect receptacle of the opinions of the philosopher, which he would then retransmit, in a perfectly transparent way, to his own readers. But this ideal is far from being attainable. Any act of reading and interpretation brings within itself a modification of that which is read or interpreted. The interpreter, even an excellent one, will receive the text through all the ideas, concepts, theses that inform his point of view, in many cases without even being aware of it. He will not passively receive the meaning in all its purity, nor will he be able to retransmit it the same way. He will become an intermediary between his own readers and the author whose opinions he aims to catalogue. But this intermediary will claim a transparency that is merely apparent and illusory.

However, even if we accept it as attainable, it is still far from what we are aiming at with this work. We have already shown how one can read through the mythical trappings of the palinode and how the aetiological myth can be used as a testimony of a certain understanding of our *de facto* condition. But our aim is not to catalogue what Plato or Socrates understood about our *de facto* condition. What we are trying to unravel is not necessarily what Plato, the man, made of flesh and bone, that lived in a specific time and place, thought about ἔρως and μανία and φρονεῖν. Our purpose is rather to enlighten our point of view regarding these same subjects. Doxography is not the aim of our work. The aim of philosophical inquiry is to bring to light all the obscurities that plague our point of view. The views and statements of a specific philosopher, when they can be exactly identified and understood, may be a big help in reaching this objective. But they are not born in a vacuum. They are the result of observation, inquiry, reflexion and argument. They are not mere statements of arbitrary opinions. They are attempts to render intelligibility to the world. They refer to something that goes beyond these statements. They are attempts to describe and explain a specific phenomenon or set of phenomena. In order to fully understand them one has to go beyond the doxography, beyond analysing their internal consistency. One has also to analyse the relationship between these descriptions and the phenomena they are trying to describe. This requires a different way of reading the text. Every statement will have to be subjected to an inquiry the aim of which is to find the phenomena that the author is describing. This requires an extra effort on our part: an effort that consists in also looking into the phenomena, using the descriptions as guides. They have to be a guide or help in our own task of understanding things as they really are. The possibility of a reading that goes beyond the doxographic and confronts the statements found in the palinode with the phenomena they are trying to describe is fundamental for what we are trying to achieve: some gains in our understanding of the μανία-φρονεῖν opposition.

3. Ontological changes: a new ontological framing and the corresponding change of the concept of lucidity

3.1. Heraclitian scheme

The myth operates at three different cosmological levels. These are, as we have seen, ἐνθάδε, the level corresponding to the one we currently inhabit, οὐρανός, the sky, immediately above, and, above this, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. These three layers seem to relate to each other in a way similar to the thought-pattern Hermann Fränkel identified in Heracleitus' thought. This thought pattern consists in what Fränkel called "a thought pattern of the geometrical mean", wherein three terms are put in an analogical relation. Term A is to term B as B is to term C: as monkeys are to men, so are men to the gods; as children are to grown men, so are they to the gods[331]. This thought pattern establishes a relation between comparisons. Term A is obviously inferior to term B. Term C is then introduced and compared with term B. This comparison, however, is further qualified by being of the same nature as the one between A and B. So B, which is in a position of superiority regarding A, is now put in a position of inferiority regard C. This last position of inferiority, however, degrades term B. Term B, previously considered, in relation to term A, as being in a position of superiority, is now seen as quite inferior to what was previously thought.

In the case of the palinode, we find a similar scheme, albeit with important differences. The three terms, earth, sky and ὑπερουράνιος τόπος can be thought of as establishing relations similar to the ones we have just mentioned. As earth is located below the sky, so is the sky located below the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The middle term, the sky, is put in a position of relative inferiority regarding the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This inferiority makes the position of term A, earth, even more significant. Ἐνθάδε will, relatively speaking, be in an even more inferior position than once thought. Instead of having just one region above it, it will have two. The “logic” of the construction of the palinode in terms of its cosmological framework is one of duplication: where our normal understanding sees one region above the one we inhabit, the palinode shows us there are two, the relationship between the middle and upper levels replicating the relationship between the lower and middle levels. This “logic” of duplication, however, is limited. It is not repeated beyond and above the upper level, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the highest of the high, the best of the best, in one word, the superlative. It is the absolute above. There is nothing above it. In the economy of the palinode, this indicates that the relationship of the souls, both human and divine, is with

[331] See above chapter V, p. 335, n. 277.

the superlative itself – an absolute superlative, with nothing above it, with all the implications we have observed that this fact has.

The introduction of this absolute above has important consequences on our understanding of our *de facto* condition. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος diminishes the importance of ἐνθάδε. It turns the region we inhabit, and, consequently, our own existence, into something quite small in the grand scheme of things. This fact is made even more striking if we consider the main difference between Heracleitus' use of this particular thought pattern and how it is used in the palinode. According to Fränkel, the middle term in this thought pattern, the geometrical mean, is identified with the common human being. This is usually placed in a relationship of superiority regarding something normally considered to be obviously inferior to it, e.g., monkeys or children. And then another comparison is introduced: a comparison with the divine. As monkeys are to men, so are men to the gods. But something very different happens in the palinode. Making the parallel with Heracleitus' aphorism, earth, ἐνθάδε, and, by extension, us, its inhabitants, are in the position corresponding to the monkeys, not men. We are not in the intermediate position, just a step below the supreme beings. We are rather in a much inferior position than we initially thought. We might still be just a step below the gods, but these are no longer the supreme beings. Something is above them.

This interferes with our normal view of ἐνθάδε. Ἐνθάδε is where our life takes place; it is the reality we usually deal with. As such, it is taken as the normal reality, as the standard by which all the rest is judged. The introduction of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος not only pushes ἐνθάδε even deeper below, but also reveals something quite important about the kind of perspective that is typical of those who inhabit ἐνθάδε. In normal circumstances, we ignore the possibility of reality being more than what we assume it is. We take our own perspective on this as canonical. Even if we admit the possibility of the existence of something else besides that which we know or assume that exists, we regard that possibility as carrying very little meaning to what regards the general effectiveness of our point of view. Whatever might be left out of our perspective regarding the reality framework is seen, in these circumstances, as mere details with little relevance. By introducing the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, Socrates opens up the possibility that what is left out might be actually the most important.

3.2. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος: a stratigraphic approach

In our ongoing task of unravelling or unpacking the different elements that compose the aetiological narrative of the second part of the palinode, a specific element deserves special and prolonged attention: the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. In fact, one could say that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος plays the protagonist role in the whole story, defining, determining and influencing all other elements. This being said, we must not lose sight of the fact that the mythical narrative of the second part of the palinode is also centred on the adventures and misadventures of the ψυχαί, i.e., of each and every one of us. These ψυχαί at the centre of the narrative are themselves determined and defined by their relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. But, then again, in the aetiological narrative the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is identified and approached from the point of view of the ψυχαί, or, to be more precise, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος figures in the narrative precisely because it is the determining factor in the life of the ψυχαί. It is therefore the relationship the ψυχαί at each time have with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος that is the core of the narrative.

In the next few pages we will concentrate our attention on the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and its relationship with the ψυχαί that populate the aetiological narrative. Beneath this aetiological narrative lies an aetiological description with a peculiar structure: a stratigraphic structure, so to speak[332]. By this we mean that the elements that make up the mythical narrative constitute different layers of a whole: the different conditions of the ψυχαί as well as the different situations they go through, as they are determined by their relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The narrative is composed by more than a simple juxtaposition of elements. They are rather articulated in such a way that the prior elements, which constitute the first layer, are the condition of possibility of the elements that will make up the subsequent layer, and so on. Each new layer corresponds to the introduction of new determinations. These new determinations qualify and specify the relationship between the ψυχαί and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος in a multiplicity of different modalities: from the basic relationship common to all ψυχαί, to the more specific forms of connection that characterise different types of ψυχή and different positions of proximity to and distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

The addition of determination upon determination results in a change in perspective – a zooming in on the elements at stake. The perspective that characterises

[332] See p. 389, above.

the first layer is equivalent to looking at a vast landscape from afar: it may comprehend the vastness of the horizon, but it will be somewhat lacking in detail. By concentrating on a section of the landscape, and thereby making the focus more specific, one is able to discern details impossible to see from a more general and encompassing angle. This constitutes a new look over what was already seen, but a new look that brings to light aspects that would have been previously overlooked, and that add complexity and variety to the landscape. The second layer is brought to light as the result of a similar zooming in: the first layer corresponds to a broader and more general view of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and the connection of the ψυχαί to it, while the second and subsequent layers will be the result of a concentration on a specific aspect, which brings to the forefront previously unrevealed details. The different layers therefore correspond to different stages of specification of the relationship between the ψυχαί and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. They correspond to different moments of a progressively closer look at what at first is a view from afar.

What results from these different layers of determination and from these moments of zooming in is something we could describe as a formula of human nature or of the human condition. We mean a formula in the chemical sense of the word: a description of the different elements that constitute human nature, and how they connect and combine with one another. These different elements are not presented all at once in Socrates' narrative. They are progressively brought forward throughout the different layers of the stratigraphic structure, as more and more determinations are added. Starting from the determinations that are common to every ψυχή, the addition of new determinations will gradually add more elements, allowing a more detailed description of the nature, condition and situation of human beings to a high degree of specificity. Seen from a different angle, this means that not only human nature and condition in general, but also the particular situation of each and every human being are the result of this mechanism of specification and progressive determination in an ontological framework characterised by the existence and preponderance of something like the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

What the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος might be is therefore of primary importance not only for drawing our outline of the stratigraphic structure of the palinode, but also for reaching a detailed definition and description of our nature and condition as human beings.

Let us then start with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος itself. We have already seen that what characterises this particular place within the cosmological framework of the second part of the palinode is its uppermost position – above both the earth and the sky. We have also seen that the relationship between these three regions can be understood as an instance of the Heraclitian scheme: as the sky is to the earth, so is the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος to the sky. At play here is a mechanism of iteration: the first relation (in this case, between earth and sky) is repeated, thereby establishing the relation between sky and ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Formally, there would be no obstacle to repeating this mechanism. We would then get some sort of hyper-ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and then a hyper-hyper-ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and so on *ad infinitum*. This, however, does not happen at all in Socrates' story. The mechanism of iteration stops at the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. There is nothing above it. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the highest of the high, the "absolute above". This is a determining element in the mythical narrative, at least as important as the application of the mechanism of iteration that resulted in the introduction of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

The significance of this absolutely supreme position of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος becomes clear when we look at it from the viewpoint of the relationship with the ψυχαί. The ψυχαί are not connected with an intermediary region of reality; the ψυχαί are not connected with a region that only *seems* to be the uppermost region of reality. Rather, the ψυχαί are connected with a region of reality located at the summit of reality, above which nothing is. The ψυχαί are all about the superlatively high. But the position of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as the uppermost region is more than just a cosmological curiosity. Symbolically, this position clearly indicates its superlative importance and dignity. The aetiological significance of this is that the ψυχαί are intrinsically connected with the unsurpassable, in other words, with the most important thing there is. The ψυχαί are intrinsically defined and determined by this relationship – by the fact that they are all about the superlative. This constitutes an element of absolute novelty introduced by the palinode – one of several. The fact that there is nothing above the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος means that the correlate of the intrinsic connection of the ψυχαί is nothing less than the absolute highest. The ψυχαί are determined by their relationship with the superlatively high.

The ψυχαί are intrinsically connected to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the "absolute above". This is one of their fundamental defining features. In fact, this forms the first

layer of what we have called the stratigraphic structure of the palinode: a layer that consists of the most fundamental and general defining characteristic of every ψυχή, the constitutive connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the uppermost region. From this one can also start to derive the clauses of the above mentioned formula of human nature as understood in the mythical narrative of the palinode. The first clause of this formula is the following: like every other ψυχή, the human ψυχαί have a constitutive connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, i.e., the "absolute above", the highest of the high, the unsurpassable. We will find additional clauses to this formula as we go along with our analysis.

This, of course, might be undermined by the fact that the description of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, in spite of its crucial role in the mythical narrative of the palinode, is presented in somewhat vague terms (247c4ff.). There are, however, a few things we are specifically told about it, and, as we shall see, from these characteristics it is possible to extract its essential features, i.e., those that are the most relevant for determining the nature of the ψυχή.

Let us then consider the most important characteristics. The first of these characteristics is one that might otherwise pass unnoticed: the fact that this "absolute above" is not simple. It could very well be that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος was a simple reality with which the ψυχαί were fundamentally connected. But the palinode says otherwise: the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is fundamentally characterised by multiplicity, i.e., it is a place that contains a multiplicity of beings. In the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος we can find A *and* B *and* C *and* D, and so forth. Some of these beings are listed in the palinode: δικαιοσύνη itself, as well as σωφροσύνη, and ἐπιστήμη (247d5), and also τὸ κάλλος (250b1ff.) and φρόνησις (250d4). But it is clear that this list does not exhaust the universe of determinations that populate the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The description of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is elliptical, which produces the clear suggestion that there is an undetermined number of other determinations that are left unmentioned.

As for the beings that are explicitly mentioned, it is possible to identify their common denominator. What is found in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the full, comprehensive and overwhelming presence of each one of these beings. All these beings are what they are, wholly what they are, and nothing but what they are. In each of them can be found the most concentrated, the most undiluted instantiation of what makes each

of them be what it is. The δικαιοσύνη found in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος will be as much δικαιοσύνη as δικαιοσύνη can be, with nothing to restrict or diminish it. This also means that in each of these beings one can find the totality of what is at stake in each of them. To be in contact with any of them is to be in contact with that being in its fullest form, lacking nothing of what makes it be what it is. Each being therefore corresponds to the perfect version of what is at stake in each of them. So the δικαιοσύνη found in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the most perfect, complete and full instantiation of δικαιοσύνη. It is simply δικαιοσύνη, nothing besides and nothing less than δικαιοσύνη. It will be δικαιοσύνη in its purest and fullest form. Likewise, the σωφροσύνη that inhabits the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the most perfect, complete and full instantiation of σωφροσύνη. It is simply σωφροσύνη, nothing besides and nothing less than σωφροσύνη; σωφροσύνη in its purest and fullest form. And the same can be said about the other beings listed. It is in this sense that we will find in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος δικαιοσύνη αὐτή, δικαιοσύνη itself, as well as the other beings (247d4). All of these will be found in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος in their perfect form. These perfect, full, undiluted and unrestricted beings have an overwhelming presence[333]. Not only do they attract and impress, but, once accessed, they also appear in such a way as to eclipse everything that does not belong in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Nothing will be lacking from them, and nothing will be able to surpass them in any respect. What this means is that each of these beings is in itself, so to speak, an "absolute above": there is nothing higher than any of them in what regards what is at stake in each of them. In other words, each of these beings is a superlative form of their own kind. This makes the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος the seat of a multiplicity of superlatives, each one of these superlatives an "absolute above", unsurpassable in its own kind.

What we have just seen are the common traits of the beings explicitly listed in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. But there is the clear suggestion that these traits are also shared by the beings whose presence in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is merely implied by the elliptical nature of the description. This means that these traits constitute a general characterisation for any being that has its place in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, not just the ones explicitly mentioned. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, to which the ψυχαί are intrinsically connected, will contain a multiplicity of beings, all of which correspond to the superlative form of their

[333] 250a4ff.: "ὀλίγαι δὴ λείπονται αἷς τὸ τῆς μνήμης ἱκανῶς πάρεστιν: αὗται δέ, ὅταν τι τῶν ἐκεῖ ὁμοίωμα ἴδωσιν, ἐκπλήττονται καὶ οὐκέτ᾽ ἐν αὑτῶν γίγνονται"

own kind, including those that are merely suggested by the elliptical nature of the description. It is precisely because these beings are superlative that they are placed in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος – itself the superlative region of the aetiological cosmology drawn in the mythical narrative of the palinode. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the "absolute above", is the place where superlatives are to be found.

From what we have seen so far we can add a clause to the formula of human nature. The ψυχαί are intrinsically connected with something unsurpassable. This, however, is not simple, but composed of a multiplicity of superlative beings. In short, the ψυχαί is intrinsically connected with an unsurpassable or superlative reality that is itself made up of a multiplicity of superlative or unsurpassable beings.

Therefore, the vagueness of the characterisation of these superlatives is only relative. Even if we are not given an exhaustive description of each one of those superlatives, and not even a complete list, we can, however, determine, to a certain extent, what these superlatives are and how they relate to each other. We can do this by once again approaching the matter from the viewpoint of the central character of the narrative: the ψυχή. More specifically, the answer to the question regarding the superlatives in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος can be answered when we consider what kind of relationship exists between the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and the ψυχαί.

In this regard, the story could not be clearer: the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the goal, aim and objective of every soul. It is the *terminus ad quem* of the absolute journey in which the souls are at all times engaged. Reaching the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος (the highest of the high, the supreme above, the superlative), defines and consumes the life of those souls. They are absolutely committed to that task. But it is more than that. The way this is described makes it clear that the ψυχαί's relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is one of yearning, desire and need (248a1ff.). The ψυχαί are superlatively eager to reach it, on the one hand; they cannot do without it, on the other. This is not a desire that can be ignored. Neither is it a need that one grudgingly has to fulfil. The souls both *desire* and *need* the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This is expressed by the image of hunger – an intrinsic need for something without which one cannot live, which one craves for intensely[334]. The

[334] The connection the ψυχαί have to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is recurringly described using the language of feeding and nourishment. The final stage of the procession of the gods to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is described as a feast: "ὅταν δὲ δὴ πρὸς δαῖτα καὶ ἐπὶ θοίνην ἴωσιν, ἄκραν ἐπὶ τὴν ὑπουράνιον ἁψῖδα πορεύονται πρὸς ἄναντες" (247a7-b1). The contact with the superlatives that inhabit the ὑπερουράνιος

souls have a superlative hunger for the superlative – the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This constitutes the fundamental defining feature of the ψυχαί, as they are described throughout the second part of the palinode. The relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as being one of hunger is a constant element of the ψυχαί – a relationship that will survive, albeit in a somewhat modified way, throughout the different conditions the ψυχαί find themselves in their adventures and misadventures.

But if we were to see this as only a feature of the ψυχαί, we would be missing the point. This defines the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as the conjugation of superlatives that is the correlate of the fundamental hunger of the ψυχαί. However, the text makes it clear that not all superlatives have their place in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The fact that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is hungered for by the ψυχαί clearly implies that not all superlatives have their place there. "Negative" determinations, i.e., determinations that would not be the object of the fundamental hunger, those determinations the ψυχαί would not need and desire, have no place there. The determinations that populate the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος are those that can be the *termini ad quos* of the fundamental hunger the ψυχαί are the bearers of. In other words, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not simply the conjunction of the whole lot of superlative determinations, but rather the conjunction of every *desirable* superlative, i.e., the superlative form of everything the souls need and want. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος only includes the superlatives that the soul might need or desire, never those that the soul rejects and tries to flee from. There will therefore be no place there for the superlatively painful, or for the superlatively evil, for the superlatively ugly or for the superlatively false. Only those superlatives that the soul pursues and yearns for will reside there. It is in this sense that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος can be defined as the concentration of superlatives – or, to be more accurate, of *positive* superlatives.

Moreover, the elliptical nature of the description suggests that this concentration of positive superlatives includes *each and every* positive superlative – not only the ones explicitly listed, but also any other positive superlatives that may exist. In other words,

τόπος is described using the language of feeding: "ἆρ᾽ οὖν θεοῦ διάνοια νῷ τε καὶ ἐπιστήμῃ ἀκηράτῳ τρεφομένη, καὶ ἁπάσης ψυχῆς ὅσῃ ἂν μέλῃ τὸ προσῆκον δέξασθαι, ἰδοῦσα διὰ χρόνου τὸ ὂν ἀγαπᾷ τε καὶ θεωροῦσα τἀληθῆ τρέφεται καὶ εὐπαθεῖ" (247d1ff.). When the non-divine souls are unable to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, they feed on an inferior and inadequate substitute: "καὶ ἀπελθοῦσαι τροφῇ δοξαστῇ χρῶνται" (248b5). The nourishment provided by the contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is explicitly connected with the development of the wings: "οὗ δ᾽ ἕνεχ᾽ ἡ πολλὴ σπουδὴ τὸ ἀληθείας ἰδεῖν πεδίον οὗ ἐστιν, ἥ τε δὴ προσήκουσα ψυχῆς τῷ ἀρίστῳ νομὴ ἐκ τοῦ ἐκεῖ λειμῶνος τυγχάνει οὖσα, ἥ τε τοῦ πτεροῦ φύσις, ᾧ ψυχὴ κουφίζεται, τούτῳ τρέφεται." (246b5ff.). See also 246e1ff. Cf. p. 394, n. 311, above.

what each ψυχή hungers for is the *superlative* combination of every positive superlative. The ψυχαί – including us human beings – want to have it all, so to speak. They want δικαιοσύνη in its superlative form, σωφροσύνη in its superlative form, ἐπιστήμη in its superlative form, and every other desirable superlative that may happen to exist. The ψυχαί will want each of these superlatives in their pure form. More than that: they will want the combination of all the positive superlatives in such a way that the pure form of each one of them is not adulterated, restricted or diminished by the circumstance of them being combined. In other words, the ψυχαί want *each and every* superlative in its pure form, but also *all* the superlatives without hindrance to the purity of each one of them.

But the possession of the superlative is not itself superlative if it lacks a superlative character. By this we mean that the ψυχαί do not wish a possession of the superlative that is restricted or diminished in any way. The ψυχαί want an absolute, unhindered and unlimited possession and enjoyment of the superlative goods. This means that the ψυχαί will want to enjoy the positive superlatives *forever*. The correlate of this desire is that eternity is one of the features that characterise the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and the superlatives themselves. So what the ψυχαί want and need, what they yearn and hunger for is to reach, possess and enjoy the highest of the high, the best of the best, that which is unsurpassably good in every respect, for ever and ever and ever. And this absolute hunger for everything that is absolutely desirable is what defines every single ψυχή.

Seen from this angle, it becomes clear that the relatively vague and elliptical character of the description of the superlatives cannot be considered a flaw. Rather, it is a manifestation of the peculiar nature of souls' own connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The souls hunger for all the superlatives explicitly listed by Socrates – but they will also hunger for all other positive superlatives that may happen to exist. Such is the hunger human beings are the bearers of that it will be directed towards whatever positive superlatives may exist. This description may be formal and vague, but it is accurate nonetheless. It is an imperfect description, if considered as a mere description of a plac in the context of the mythical narrative. But if we consider it in the context of the aetiological description of human condition, it becomes clear that this reflects the vagueness of our own relationship with the superlatively desirable. Seen from this angle, the vagueness of the description of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος becomes an accurate description of our own relationship with the superlative, as something we tend to conceive in formal and vague terms. We wish and desire all that is good in every respect, but our

understanding of it is generic. Any attempt at cataloguing what these superlatives might be produces an open-ended list, which would always have room for yet another positive superlative, if it exists. And so the description of the superlative is vague because our own knowledge of what the superlative might be is itself vague[335]. This analogy is apt since, as we shall see in greater detail, what is at stake in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not merely some distant realm where equally distant desirable superlatives dwell, pursued and hungered for by some strange airborne creatures. Rather, what is at stake here is the relationship that all ψυχαί, including human beings, i.e., each and every one of us, have with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the superlative combination of positive superlatives.

From this we can once again update the formula of human nature. Human beings hunger for possessing and enjoying in a superlative way the superlative combination of positive superlatives. But human beings are constituted in such a way that what they hunger for is a superlative that is vague and elliptical in the sense we have just seen. Human beings want more, but what that "more" may be is to a certain extent undetermined.

So far we have looked into the first layer of the stratigraphic structure of the palinode: the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as the *terminus ad quem* of a connection that is intrinsic to every ψυχή. It is now time to focus on the other element of this fundamental connection to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος: the ψυχαί. At first glance, this might seem to be a different subject, but it is nothing of the sort. In fact, this is a new aspect of the matter at hand, one that comes to the forefront as the result of a zooming in of the text, in the specific sense we have described before, on what is at stake in the first layer of the stratigraphic structure of the palinode. In other words, the connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is now revealed by Socrates as something complex. The complexity of the relationship also changes the way in which the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is itself recognised. This corresponds to the second layer of the stratigraphic structure – a layer that emerges as the text zooms in at what constituted the first layer. From this emerges a more detailed picture of what is

[335] This correlation shows that the view of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος that Socrates provides is still relatively murky and clouded. We are not shown the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος in its every detail precisely because the point of view from which the description is produced is still far from a point of view that has full access to the state of affairs it is describing. Rather, there is the strong suggestion that there is plenty about the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος Socrates ignores or is unable to communicate. Yet, even if the description is not entirely detailed and complete, it nonetheless corresponds to a higher degree of access than is usually accorded to our normal point of view. The point of view adopted by Socrates in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is therefore something in between our normal point of view, which usually has no clear notification of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and a perfect and unhindered access to it, for which the ellipsis would not exist.

at stake in the relationship between the ψυχαί and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the superlative concentration of positive superlatives.

Now, this more detailed picture introduces a degree of specificity to the general relationship between the ψυχαί and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. What at first appeared as something invariable and lacking in detail to a less focused perspective is now revealed to admit a multiplicity of different possibilities. This focus on the general relationship between the ψυχαί and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος shows how this relationship admits a multiplicity of variations, i.e., that it is not simple and monolithic, but rather complex and changeable. The picture becomes more complicated: where before we could only see the general basic relationship, we can now see different types of the same relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος; where before the ψυχαί were only seen as the correlate of this relationship, they now appear as possessing a complex composition. This bringing forth of more details and specifications will go on all the way to the third and final layer of the stratigraphic structure, where the complexity of the second layer will bring to light the different degrees of proximity and distance in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος in which the ψυχαί can be situated. The stratigraphic structure of the aetiological narrative necessarily includes the different modalities of the ψυχαί's relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. And since the ψυχαί in general, and human beings in particular, are defined by their relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the further along we go in our exploration of the different layers, the more specific and differentiated our view of the ψυχαί will be, and the more complete the formula of human nature will become[336].

Let us then take a closer look. The existence of an intrinsic connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, i.e., the superlative concentration of positive superlatives, constitutes a common feature of every ψυχή. It also constitutes a constant element throughout the stratigraphic structure. Regardless of the degree of specification and change the ψυχή may undergo, the connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος remains. More than that: this constant element is the condition of possibility of the multiplicity of variations the ψυχαί can go through.

[336] There are other general characteristics of the ψυχαί in general, human and divine, that albeit important, are not relevant to our approach. These are to be found at the first level of the account of the nature of the ψυχή, qualifying both the divine and non-divine ψυχαί. So the ψυχαί are immortal, or, to be more precise eternal, since they have no end and no beginning (245c5ff). They are self-moving (245c5ff.). They animate the σῶμα (245e4ff.). They exercise ἐπιμέλεια over that which is ἄψυχον (246b6ff.).

It is this variation that introduces the second of the three layers of the stratigraphic structure. We have seen before that a constant characteristic, common to all ψυχαί, present in the first layer of the stratigraphic structure is the condition of possibility of the variations found in the second layer. Something similar happens in the second layer. One of the variations, the ψυχαί of the gods, is put aside, and the focus moves to only one of the types, the human ψυχή, and its peculiar composition. And this constitutes the constant that becomes the condition of possibility of the variations that make up the third layer. And so, in the same way that the first constant, the intrinsic connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, is the condition of possibility of the second layer (and, by extension, the third), so will the second constant, sc. the peculiar composition of the human ψυχαί, be the condition of possibility of the third layer. These constants are matrices of variability, or, to look at it from another angle, the moments of variation occur in a context defined by elements of constancy.

By focusing on the ψυχαί, we are able to see how the second layer is introduced: by a first moment of specification of the ψυχαί. These are no longer seen in block, as an undifferentiated mass that is connected with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. They are now divided into two different types: divine and non-divine or human. Each of these types is intrinsically connected with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but this connection is now qualified by a difference. The relationship the divine souls have with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is easy[337]. They have no problems reaching it and access is always guaranteed. For the non-divine souls, i.e., for human beings, the situation is the opposite. The journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is full of obstacles and perils, which may or may not be overcome[338].

This adds another clause to the formula that defines human nature: the connection human beings have with the superlative combination of positive superlatives is not easy and immediate, but rather characterised by the presence of obstacles and complications. It is, in short, an intrinsically hindered connection.

[337] The easy and unhindered access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος the gods of the second part of the palinode enjoy echoes the traditional Homeric notion of the gods as beings whose lives are without hardship. This notion of the gods of the second part of the palinode as θεοὶ ῥεῖα ζώοντες (HOMER, *Iliad* VI, 138; *Odyssey* IV, 805; V, 122) becomes even more evident when we consider the meaning of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, as we have been able to ascertain so far. The fact that they can access the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος easily means that they can achieve without problems what we humans in most cases can only dream of: to enjoy the superlative combination of positive superlatives, i.e. to have easy access to everything one may ever need and desire. For the gods everything that is superlatively good is assured. Cf. *supra*, p. 407.

[338] 246b2: "ᾗ δὴ τὰ μὲν θεῶν ὀχήματα ἰσορρόπως εὐήνια ὄντα ῥᾳδίως πορεύεται, τὰ δὲ ἄλλα μόγις"

This fundamental difference in the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is related to another difference, which becomes apparent as we focus our attention on the composition of the ψυχή. At first it is the common traits that come to the forefront. Both the divine and non-divine souls are described by employing the image of the winged chariot, with its charioteer and horses[339]. But these elements of community between the two types of ψυχή are immediately qualified by a set of differences. Probably in tune with the palinode's anthropological focus, we are told more about the human ψυχαί than about the divine ones. We know the number of horses that pull the human chariot, two; but we are not told how many horses pull the divine chariot. We are told the divine horses are always good and obedient, and nothing else is said about it. In contrast, we are told about the complexity of the human ψυχαί, and the complicated connections established and conflicts that arise between their different components. Once the division of the ψυχαί is made, the divine ψυχαί are only relevant insofar as they influence the human ψυχαί, or can be used to illustrate something about the human ψυχαί, by contrast. After this point the focus is on the human ψυχαί[340].

But before we consider the specific characteristics of the human ψυχή, we must first look into the significance of the image that describes both the human and divine ψυχαί: the chariot. This image is an important symbol in the context of the palinode, one that invokes a complex set of meanings and associations, deeply imbued in ancient Greek culture. However, we will concentrate our attention on just a few of those aspects, the ones that play a more relevant role in the narrative. First, the chariot is an image that immediately suggests speed. In the context of ancient Greek culture, the chariot's speed is superlative: of all the means of transportation known to the Greeks, a chariot pulled by strong horses would be the fastest. Therefore, the image of the chariot invokes the idea of superlative speed, of being able to reach one's destination easily and quickly. But the chariot also suggests power and strength. Concentrated in a small space, in the chariot we

[339] 246a6ff: "ἐοικέτω δὴ συμφύτῳ δυνάμει ὑποπτέρου ζεύγους τε καὶ ἡνιόχου. θεῶν μὲν οὖν ἵπποι τε καὶ ἡνίοχοι πάντες αὐτοί τε ἀγαθοὶ καὶ ἐξ ἀγαθῶν, τὸ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων μέμεικται. καὶ πρῶτον μὲν ἡμῶν ὁ ἄρχων συνωρίδος ἡνιοχεῖ, εἶτα τῶν ἵππων ὁ μὲν αὐτῷ καλός τε καὶ ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἐκ τοιούτων, ὁ δ᾽ ἐξ ἐναντίων τε καὶ ἐναντίος: χαλεπὴ δὴ καὶ δύσκολος ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἡ περὶ ἡμᾶς ἡνιόχησις. πῇ δὴ οὖν θνητόν τε καὶ ἀθάνατον ζῷον ἐκλήθη πειρατέον εἰπεῖν."

[340] What seems to be at stake here, from a methodological point of view, is not simply to divide a genus into two species, but also to discard or put aside one of them to concentrate mostly or solely on the other. The discarded species is relevant insofar as it contributes to determine, by contrast, the species that will be the object of further analysis and division. In this regard, the method used by Socrates is somewhat similar to the one used by the Eleatic Stranger in the *Sophist*. See *Sophist* 218e1ff. Cf. *Phaedrus* 265e1ff.

find the strength of powerful animals, the horses, compounded by them working together. This is an "explosive force" that can be felt in a moment's notice. In short, the image of the chariot immediately suggests two superlatives: superlative speed and superlative power[341].

This is taken to its ultimate level by the presence of the wings. Being winged, the soul-chariot will be able to move in a different plane: it will be able to fly. With wings, the chariot can negotiate long and arduous distances, fly over massive obstacles and reach places that would otherwise be impossible to reach. Any limitations that a normal, wingless, chariot might suffer from are immediately reduced to nothing by wings' ability to take it anywhere. This winged chariot is a vehicle that can get to any point in the world, quickly and efficiently. It has absolute mobility. But this absolute mobility that wings allow is even greater than one would expect. The winged chariot does not only fly to the

[341] The chariot is a recurring motive in ancient Greek literature, often associated with the magnificence of the gods and kings, but also with strength, speed and superior mobility. See, e.g., HOMER, *Iliad* V, 719-752; VIII, 41-50, 438-440; XIII, 23-28; SAPPHO, fr. 1; ALCAEUS, fr. 1c Lobel and Page; BACCHYLIDES, 5.176ff., 10.51-52; ANACREON, fr. 4 Diehl; SIMONIDES, fr. 79, fr. 111 Diehl PINDAR, *Ol.* 6. 22-28, 9.80-81; *I*. 2.1-3, 7.16-21, 8.62; *N*. 3. 71; 6.69, 7.6; *P*. 10.64-66, PARMENIDES B1.1-5 DK, EMPEDOCLES, B3.3-5 DK, ANACREON, fr. 4 DIEHL. See also: DELEBECQUE, E., *Le cheval dans l'Iliade, suivi d'un lexique du cheval chez Homère et d'un essai sur le cheval pré-homérique*, Paris, C. Klincksieck, 1951; ANDERSON, J. K., *Ancient Greek Horsemanship*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1961; BUCCA, S., La imagen del carro en el Fedro de Platón y en la Katha-Upanisad, *Anales de Filología Clássica* 8 (1961-1963), 5-28; DUMORTIER, J., L'attelage ailé du *Phèdre* (246 sqq.), *Revue des Etudes Greques* 82 (1969), 246-248; SIMPSON, M., The Chariot and the Bow as Metaphors for Poetry in Pindar's Odes, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 100 (1969), 437-473; GREENHALGH, P. A. L., *Early Greek Warfare: Horsemen and Chariots in the Homeric and Archaic Ages*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1973, especially 7ff.; MOREAU, A., L'attelage et le navire ; la rencontre de deux thèmes dans l'œuvre d'Eschyle. *Revue de Philologie, de Littérature et d'Histoire Anciennes* 53 (1979), 98-115; ALLEN, M., *Marsilio Ficino and the Phaedran Charioteer*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1981; PIGGOTT, S., *The Earliest Wheeled Transport: from the Atlantic Coast to the Caspian Sea*, Ithaca, Thames and Hudson, 1983; STAGAKIS, G., Homeric warfare practices, *Historia* 34 (1985), 129-152; CROUWEL, J. H., *Chariots and Other Wheeled Vehicles in Iron Age Greece*, Allard Pierson Series 9, Amsterdam, 1992; LECLERC, M.-C., L'attelage d'Hésiode : les difficultés d'une reconstitution, *Dialogues d'Histoire Ancienne* 20 (1994), 53-84; BELFIORE, E., Dancing with the gods: the myth of the chariot in Plato's *Phaedrus*, *American Journal of Philology* 127 (2006), 185-217; SLAVEVA-GRIFFIN, S., Of gods, Philosophers, and Charioteers: Content and Form in Parmenides' Proem and Plato's *Phaedrus*, *Transactions and Proceeding of the American Philological Association* 133 (2003), 227-253; HIMMELHOCH, L., The Charioteer: Representations of Power in Greek Literature, diss. University of Texas at Austin, 1997; NÜNLIST, R., *Poetologische Bildersprache in der frühgriechischen Dichtung*, Stuttgart und Leipzig, Teubner, 1998, 255-261; GOH, M., *The Poetics of Chariot Driving and Rites of Passage in Ancient Greece*, diss. Harvard University, 2004; GRIFFITH, M., Horsepower and Donkeywork: Equids and the Ancient Greek Imagination, Part One, *Classical Philology* 101 (2006), 185-246, especially 200ff.; IDEM, Horsepower and Donkeywork: Equids and the Ancient Greek Imagination, Part Two, *ibidem*, 307-358, especially 324ff.; CLEMENTS, J. H., *The Image of the Charioteer in Funerary Art and Plato's Phaedrus*, diss. University of Florida, 2007; CALAME, C., Metaphorical Travel and Ritual Performance in Epinician Poetry, in AGÓCS, P., CAREY, C., RAWLES, R. (ed.), *Reading the Victory Ode*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012, 303-320. Cf. *supra*, p. 409, n 323.

uppermost limit of the sky. The wings confer to the chariot a hyperouranic mobility. The chariot can go even beyond the sky, into that region of reality that is usually hidden from us down here on earth – the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the absolute above, the superlative combination of all positive superlatives[342].

By focusing on the chariot as the image of the ψυχή, we realise that this is an image marked both by unity and by the presence of a multiplicity of elements. The chariot is a unified whole, made up of several parts that are nonetheless interconnected and that move together. These different parts are integrated in a unity that prevails over the multiplicity. The image itself, the chariot that may be driven or merely seen passing by, is one where the multiplicity of its constituent elements is subsumed by the unity of the whole. Yet, the fact that this unity contains a multiplicity is a decisive factor in the stratigraphic structure. However, not every element of multiplicity is relevant. Some of them merely fade into the background, while others are of a decisive importance. The chariot itself, the vehicle, is not the focus of analysis. No importance is given to the wheels or the axle, for example.

Let us then take a look at those elements that play a fundamental role. Of the elements that make up the chariot, only three will be the focus of the mythical narrative: the charioteer and the two horses. Why these are chosen over the others is clear: these elements are the ones able to influence and determine the direction of the chariot's movement. In the economy of the image, each one of them has a proper role. The charioteer drives the chariot, determining the direction of travel. The horses pull the chariot. But the fact is that each of these elements is autonomous, and able to impart on the whole its own specific direction. If they could, each of these elements would go on its own way, or alternatively, determine unilaterally the direction of the whole.

This complex interaction between these different forces makes up a model of complex traction. The forces that are able to influence or determine the overall direction of the whole are multiple. This means that at every moment there is a multiplicity of

[342] This description, of course, only strictly applies to those wings that are fully developed and functional. As we shall see in greater detail further on, there are other inferior stages of the development of the wings, where these are weakened and mutilated. In these inferior stages, one does not have the actual ability to fly beyond the sky. But the potentiality to do so remains there. It is a hindered potentiality, but a potentiality nonetheless. As the wings can regrow and regain their superlative strength, even this hindrance may perhaps be overcome. Thus human beings are at all times the bearers of this potential superlative mobility, even if this mobility is often limited by a multiplicity of factors.

possible paths available to the chariot – even if the proper one is only the one that leads to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Each of three elements has the ability to influence the overall outcome in one way or another: by setting a course, in the case of the charioteer, or by rebelling, resisting and trying to pull in a different direction, in the case of the bad horse, or simply by supporting and reinforcing the power of the charioteer, in the case of the good horse. From the point of view of the leading element, the charioteer, the horses are heterogeneous elements that may or may not follow his lead. They are not like the charioteer, and may introduce into the mobility of the chariot a different source of power and a potentially different direction. But they can also be used by the charioteer and mobilised towards the charioteer's objective: reaching the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the superlative concentration of positive superlatives.

There is, in short, the possibility of conflict regarding the destination of the chariot. But there is also the possibility of channelling the strength of the horses towards the proper aim. In any case, driving and directing the chariot is at all times a problematic matter – a problem that arises from the very composition of the ψυχή. This particular chariot is a dynamic reality, that requires constant driving and guidance. It is the bearer of a multiplicity of different options made possible by the autonomous nature of the different elements. The multiplicity of elements that compose the ψυχή is a multiplicity that contains in itself the possibility of a multiplicity of different and potentially incompatible directions and destinations.

But there is another aspect we have yet to consider. These three elements or forces are intrinsically linked to one another. The charioteer and the two horses are bound to one another in such a way that it is impossible for any of them to be set free from the others. These elements are part of a multiplicity constitutively united in a whole. They constitute a σύμφυτος δύναμις – and it is this σύμφυτος δύναμις that is the ψυχή. The real-life counterpart of this chariot would be a multiplicity that would come into being by the coming together of its parts, which would previously exist one without the other. But that is not the case of the chariot of the second part of palinode. The different parts cannot exist on their own: each of them cannot exist without the others. This is a unity that did not come into being as the result of the unification of discrete parts. It is a unity that is originally so. And yet, it is a unity that is composed of parts – parts that are constitutively interlinked, bound together. It is not a unified plurality. It is rather a plural unity. The elements that constitute this unity cannot be separated – they are dependent on each other.

Each of the elements cannot exist without the others, even if they are heterogeneous and potentially in conflict. So in the complex formed by the charioteer and the two horses we find a whole formed by a multiplicity of forces, each potentially pulling in a different direction, that are nonetheless originally, constitutively and ineluctably bound together.

This has important consequences for the overall direction of the chariot. As each of them is the bearer of a destination towards which the chariot could go, it is impossible for each of the elements to determine alone the direction of the whole. As they are stuck together, constitutively tied to one another, whatever one of them does will have an effect upon the others, as well as on the whole. What arises from this state of affairs is that these three elements constitute a system of forces, as it were. Each of them is a force that has the ability to pull in a specific direction. But as these forces are constitutively connected, they are bound or tied together in such a way that there is no possibility but to remain together. The movement of one will have an impact on the movement of the others. None of them will be able to move on its own, and, in order to impress on the whole its own direction, it will need to mobilise the others, or counteract their own pull. The result is that the action of one of the forces will influence the others – and the combination of all them will determine the overall direction of the chariot. The outcome, whatever it may be, will be the result of the interaction of all the forces in play, not just the one who gained the upper hand.

This introduces a degree of complexity to the journey of the human ψυχαί. The element that would normally drive the chariot and lead it towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, i.e., towards the superlative concentration of all positive superlatives, is conditioned by the fact that it is constitutively part of a system of forces with these characteristics. The proper destination might be the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but there is a potential constitutive obstacle to reaching it – an obstacle that may nonetheless be overcome – in the fact that the human ψυχή contains in the multiplicity of autonomous elements of which it is composed the germen of a multiplicity of different possible outcomes. The destination might be defined from the beginning, but the peculiar constitution of the human ψυχή allows for (and perhaps even contributes to) the possibility of going off the rails.

We will deal with this issue at length later. But now we must consider an important element of continuity between Socrates' first speech and the palinode. This element of continuity is the anthropological model we have just now been able to determine, which

echoes the anthropological model we identified as a fundamental aspect of Socrates' first speech. In both these speeches human beings are understood as the seat of a multiplicity of forces bound together and dependent on each other, potentially pulling in different directions. These forces interact with and influence each other. One of them will predominate and set, to a certain extent, the direction; but the outcome will be influenced and conditioned by the other forces in play, and the final result will be determined by the combination of all the forces. In Socrates' first speech human nature is therefore explained as the conflict between two principles: δόξα and ἐπιθυμία. The latter principle, however, is multifaceted, and includes a multiplicity of different principles, according to the specific object to which it is directed. The realm of ἐπιθυμία is not simple, but complex: it admits a variety of different ruling principles, sc. different types of ἐπιθυμία, with a variety of different outcomes. In this regard, the model of Socrates' first speech is more complex than the protagonism of the two main forces might otherwise suggest. The result is not a binary system, but a system that includes an undetermined number of forces, δόξα and all types of ἐπιθυμία, all vying for control. When δόξα triumphs, it triumphs over all types of ἐπιθυμία; when one type of ἐπιθυμία triumphs, if will not do so only over δόξα, but also over all the other types of ἐπιθυμία. One of these competing forces will try to prevail over the other or others, becoming the principle that rules over the whole system of forces[343].

There is, however, a very significant difference between the two models. Whereas the anthropological model in Socrates' first speech seems to be closed and self-contained, the model portrayed through the image of the chariot is determined by its connection to something other than its composing elements, the horses and the charioteer: the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The first could be described as a closed system; the other is an open system, directed towards something external, or, to be more precise, determined by it. The difference between these two systems lies in the fact that one of them is influenced

[343] In an anthropological model such as this, the matter of the exact number of forces at play is not the most essential aspect. The emphasis is not on the difference between an apparently binary model (such as the model of Socrates' first speech *seems* to be) and the palinode's tripartite model, but rather on the fact that it explains human nature as the result of a system of forces. In the same way, we should not assume that identity in the number of forces entails identity in other respects. So we should not go as far as to simply state that the model of the palinode, because it contains three elements, is the same as the one found in *Republic* IV (436a4ff.), and the so-called doctrine of the tripartite soul. The fact that one of the elements, the good horse, is always in agreement with one of the others, the charioteer, makes for a different dynamics from the one found in the *Republic*. There is only any conflict between the charioteer, allied with the good horse, and the bad horse.

by its connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, whereas the other one is not. In the case of the open system, the variations of the connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος correlate with the variations of the system of forces. A more intense connection with and a clearer vision of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος will help the charioteer achieve and maintain the upper hand; conversely, a weaker connection with and a blurrier vision of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος will weaken the charioteer and allow the bad horse more influence over the overall direction. In a way, the connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος acts as another force within the system, perhaps even the most important force: it is in relation to it that the whole complex of the ψυχή is determined and defined. But it is also possible that one of the three elements of the ψυχή, the charioteer, represents precisely this connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. It is unclear, therefore, if we are dealing with a system containing four forces, sc. the charioteer, the two horses and the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, or only three, the charioteer and the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος being one and the same.

But this leads us to another related question. The protagonist role played by the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος even in the balance of forces within the ψυχή presents a problem: what part of the ψυχή specifically is connected with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος? Or is it all of it? In other words: which force within the open system of forces that constitutes the ψυχή is the bearer of the fundamental hunger for the superlative? On the one hand, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος seems to be hungered for by the whole soul. On the other hand, it seems there is a primacy of the charioteer, since, in the economy of the myth, it is this part of the ψυχή that has immediate access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and directs the whole complex towards it[344].

However, even if that is the case, considering that all elements of the complex are interconnected and act upon each other, there will be some kind of mutual

[344] That the whole soul hunger for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is somewhat suggested by the fact that the access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the nourishment needed to feed the wings. See 248b5ff: οὗ δ᾽ ἕνεχ᾽ ἡ πολλὴ σπουδὴ τὸ ἀληθείας ἰδεῖν πεδίον οὗ ἐστιν, ἥ τε δὴ προσήκουσα ψυχῆς τῷ ἀρίστῳ νομὴ ἐκ τοῦ ἐκεῖ λειμῶνος τυγχάνει οὖσα, ἥ τε τοῦ πτεροῦ φύσις, ᾧ ψυχὴ κουφίζεται, τούτῳ τρέφεται.” If the whole soul is winged (see p. 416, note 318, above), then it seems that the whole soul, sc. all parts of the soul, will need to feed on the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and will therefore hunger for it. This is, however, somewhat contradicted by the fact that the only part of the soul that actually contemplates the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is the one corresponding to the charioteer. See 247c6ff.: “ἡ γὰρ ἀχρώματός τε καὶ ἀσχημάτιστος καὶ ἀναφὴς οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, ψυχῆς κυβερνήτῃ μόνῳ θεατὴ νῷ”. For the non-divine souls, in the very best case, only the head of the charioteer enters the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The horses themselves never actually reach it. See 248a1ff.: “αἱ δὲ ἄλλαι ψυχαί, ἡ μὲν ἄριστα θεῷ ἑπομένη καὶ εἰκασμένη ὑπερῆρεν εἰς τὸν ἔξω τόπον τὴν τοῦ ἡνιόχου κεφαλήν”.

"contamination". At no moment will any of the forces be acting alone, without the influence of the others. The hunger the charioteer has for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the superlative concentration of all positive superlatives, will be influenced by the other forces at play in the system, namely by the competing direction they will attempt to introduce. Conversely, those other forces will be influenced by the fundamental hunger the charioteer has for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. So even if the charioteer is the element that is primarily the bearer of the connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the other elements will be somewhat connected to it as well. This connection might be of the same nature, i.e., the hunger felt by the charioteer for the positive concentration of all positive superlatives might be somehow transmitted to the horses. But it is also possible that only the charioteer hungers for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. However, since it is the charioteer that drives the chariot, and the horses are under the charioteer's sway, even in this case the horses will be connected to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, albeit indirectly. The charioteer's position as leader would make the other elements of the soul be directed towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, even if those do not hunger for it.

Regardless of what the solution to these problems might be, one thing is clear: the fundamental connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, which characterises every ψυχή, is not, in the case of the human ψυχαί at least, the only defining factor. The formula of human nature that we have been uncovering turns out to be more complex: the connection with the superlative is just one of several defining determinations. This affects the nature of the relationship itself, since it now has to deal with several extraneous elements. In addition to the fundamental hunger for the superlative combination of positive superlatives, i.e., for everything that is good and desirable in its superlative form, human beings are also defined by the peculiar composition we have explored so far. They are the seat of a multiplicity of forces that are bound together and pull in different directions. In other words, the fundamental connection with the superlative human beings are the bearers of happens in the context of a system of forces with the characteristics we have described. In a way, the connection with the superlative will be another force at play in the system. Conversely, the outcome of the interaction between the forces within the system that makes up the human soul will influence and condition the connection with the superlative. And so a further clause can be now added to the formula: human beings are constituted in such a way that their intrinsically hindered connection with the superlative combination of all positive superlatives happens within a system of forces

characterised by the interaction between heterogeneous and potentially conflicting sources of direction.

This peculiar composition of the human ψυχαί forms a constant matrix within which a further set of variations will occur. This new set of variations is what constitutes the third and final layer of the stratigraphic structure we have been analysing. These additional variations are connected with yet another aspect of the composition of the ψυχή, an aspect we have not focused on so far: the wings. These play a particularly important role in the stratigraphic structure. This role is twofold. The first thing to consider is something we have already mentioned before, but that we must mention once again: the fact that the wings play a fundamental role in defining the position of the human ψυχή in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The wings are what allows the ψυχή to access any point in the world, and even beyond, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Without wings, the journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος would be impossible. The wings are the necessary condition for the fulfilment of the airborne souls' essential goal, for the attainment of that which the souls at all times hunger for[345]. Therefore, they define where the human soul is in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος: either in their proper place, i.e., on their way to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, or in any of a variety of inferior positions.

This leads us to a second and novel point. According to Socrates, the state of the wings is not static. The wings suffer changes in development. They may wax or wane. These changes are correlated with the changes in the connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The wings are sustained by this connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and will change according to the degree of proximity to and distance from it[346]. Conversely, this correlation is the foundation of what we can call the scale of wings[347]. This scale shows the different conditions through which the wings may pass, therefore determining the position of each ψυχή in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος: from the greater degree of

[345] 246d5ff.: "πέφυκεν ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις τὸ ἐμβριθὲς ἄγειν ἄνω μετεωρίζουσα ᾗ τὸ τῶν θεῶν γένος οἰκεῖ, κεκοινώνηκε δέ πῃ μάλιστα τῶν περὶ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ θείου ψυχή, τὸ δὲ θεῖον καλόν, σοφόν, ἀγαθόν, καὶ πᾶν ὅτι τοιοῦτον: τούτοις δὴ τρέφεταί τε καὶ αὔξεται μάλιστά γε τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς πτέρωμα, αἰσχρῷ δὲ καὶ κακῷ καὶ τοῖς ἐναντίοις φθίνει τε καὶ διόλλυται." See also 248c5ff.: "ὅταν δὲ ἀδυνατήσασα ἐπισπέσθαι μὴ ἴδῃ, καί τινι συντυχίᾳ χρησαμένη λήθης τε καὶ κακίας πλησθεῖσα βαρυνθῇ, βαρυνθεῖσα δὲ πτερορρυήσῃ τε καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν πέσῃ"

[346] 248b5ff.: "οὗ δ᾽ ἕνεχ᾽ ἡ πολλὴ σπουδὴ τὸ ἀληθείας ἰδεῖν πεδίον οὗ ἐστιν, ἥ τε δὴ προσήκουσα ψυχῆς τῷ ἀρίστῳ νομὴ ἐκ τοῦ ἐκεῖ λειμῶνος τυγχάνει οὖσα, ἥ τε τοῦ πτεροῦ φύσις, ᾧ ψυχὴ κουφίζεται, τούτῳ τρέφεται."

[347] For the notion of *scala alarum*, see CARVALHO, M. J., "Ἔρως and Πτέρως." in: CARVALHO, M. J., CAEIRO, A., TELO, H. (ed.), *In the Mirror of the Phaedrus*, Sankt Augustin, Academia Verlag, 2013, 167 -243, especially 212ff.

development, when the wings are in their full strength, to their lowest point, passing through a multiplicity of intermediary states.

This scale reflects the distance one is from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. As the fully developed wings are needed to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, mutilated wings will determine that one will fall short of that, and crash into the earth[348]. The lack of fully developed wings is a decisive factor in keeping the ψυχαί exiled on earth. The more mutilated the wings, the further one will be from recovering the initial position in the sky, and the more difficult it will be to be able once again to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

Let us consider now in greater detail what is at stake in this scale. The variation in distance will result in a variation in the visibility of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The further away one is from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the cloudier and more dimmed the awareness of it will be. This is especially true regarding the fundamental hunger. A greater degree of development of the wings correlates with the ability to recognise the *terminus ad quem* of the fundamental hunger as such: with the ability to recognise that what one needs and desires is the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This is an ability that is gradually lost as one goes down the scale of wings, and gets further and further away from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The degradation of the wings results in the ψυχή losing sight of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The increasing distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος will correspond to an increasing degree of λήθη – the ψυχή's view of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος will become gradually dimmer, and it will somehow forget about the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

It is possible that this is related to another sort of variation: a variation of the intensity of the hunger itself. The accumulation of distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, together with the loss of visibility and awareness, would be accompanied by a gradual weakening of the tension towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This is not explicitly stated in the text, though it would be congruent with the overall model at stake there. The further away one is from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the more transformed, diluted and deflected the fundamental hunger will be. The fundamental hunger itself is always present, and its *terminus ad quem* remains, as always, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. But as one loses sight of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the fundamental hunger becomes more and more susceptible to

[348] 246c1ff.: "τελέα μὲν οὖν οὖσα καὶ ἐπτερωμένη μετεωροπορεῖ τε καὶ πάντα τὸν κόσμον διοικεῖ, ἡ δὲ πτεροῤῥυήσασα φέρεται ἕως ἂν στερεοῦ τινος ἀντιλάβηται, οὗ κατοικισθεῖσα"; 248c5ff.: "ὅταν δὲ ἀδυνατήσασα ἐπισπέσθαι μὴ ἴδῃ, καί τινι συντυχίᾳ χρησαμένη λήθης τε καὶ κακίας πλησθεῖσα βαρυνθῇ, βαρυνθεῖσα δὲ πτεροῤῥυήσῃ τε καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν πέσῃ".

be confused with other desires – the desires that, in economy of the myth, are borne by the horses. By losing sight of the hunger's real *terminus ad quem*, the ψυχή will turn to pursuing different goals, which will take the place of the hunger for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, now lost in this nebulous confusion. To use the terms of the image of the chariot, the direction set by the charioteer will have to deal with a much stronger bad horse – which will deviate the ψυχή somewhat from the true goal of its hunger. As such, the intensity of the hunger for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is somewhat diminished, since it is deflected and divided. It is not aimed directly at the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but rather at substitutes; it is no longer directed at a single set of goals, at the superlative conjunction of all desirable superlatives, but at a multiplicity of inferior goals. As such, it will not be experienced as the intense desire that defines a whole life completely, but rather as a plurality of tensions that, for the most part, are relatively moderate. That a diminishment of the intensity of the connection to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as such might occur is suggested by what happens when the wings start to regrow, e.g., when ἔρως awakes. The overwhelming intensity of the tension that overcomes the ἐραστής contrasts with the mildness of everyday life. This suggests that the reduction in the distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος also brings an increase in the intensity of the connection, an increase which occurs in a context in which that intensity had already suffered a very significant reduction.

Now, the position within the scale of wings, together with the different possible outcomes of the interaction between the elements that compose the ψυχή constitute what we can designate as the third layer of the stratigraphic structure. This third layer is the most varied and multifaceted layer. It presupposes the previous two layers. As we have seen before, the constant element, common to all ψυχαί, that constitutes the first layer, i.e., the connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, was modified and further determined by the determinations that constitute the second layer. These determinations constitute another constant element, but an element that is common to all human ψυχαί only (putting aside, as we have seen, the divine ψυχαί): the peculiar composition of the human ψυχαί. But this peculiar composition, together with connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, becomes a principle of variation – it is the condition of possibility of a multiplicity of different outcomes. The third layer is constituted by these different outcomes. As such, this third layer includes a large number of different possibilities, the result of a complex set of variables. This third layer leads us to the lowermost limit of the whole stratigraphic

structure, a limit that is located just before the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, as it varies and gradually dims, altogether disappears. This means that the inferior limit of the scale of wings is one where the wings may be in their most reduced state, but still present nonetheless. The wings may be so degraded they are nothing but stumps; but these stumps are still stumps of wings, and contain within themselves the potential to regrow. Thus the human soul is always winged, and this means that the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is a fundamental and permanent characteristic of human nature, one which is never lost, even when human beings are in the most degraded condition.

Being human means always being connected with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, i.e., with the "absolute above", the superlative combination of all positive superlatives. But this connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not the only thing that defines human beings. As we have seen, there are other factors at play. The third layer of the stratigraphic structure brings new additional clauses to the formula of human nature. We are now in condition to present this formula in its full form.

If we consider all the elements we have seen so far, we find the following. Human beings are ψυχαί that are intrinsically connected with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This means that we hunger for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος – that is to say, we want, need and yearn for the easy and unhindered enjoyment and possession of the superlative concentration of all positive superlatives. But human nature is such that this relationship with the superlative concentration of all positive superlatives is always marked by some degree of difficulty. Human beings are therefore those beings that have a hindered relationship with the superlative concentration of all positive superlatives. When zooming in on the nature of the human ψυχαί, we find yet another clause to add to this formula. Human ψυχαί are systems of forces – forces intrinsically bound together, and pulling in different directions. This constitutes a factor of intrinsic instability, which combines and interacts with the constant connection with the superlative. This means that human beings are those beings in which an intrinsically hindered connection with the superlative concentration of positive superlatives happens within a framework of a system of forces characterised by complex traction and the possibility of a multiplicity of different directions and outcomes. When we consider the different degrees of development of the wings, we soon realise that yet another clause has to be added to the formula – the final clause. The possible different degrees of development of the wings are conditions of possibility of a multiplicity of different outcomes – different positions and situations in which each individual human

being may be in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This means that the original and fundamental connection with the superlative is modified by a multiplicity of conditions. These conditions may modify the fundamental relationship in such a way that the result may be a variety of very different avatars of this fundamental relationship, and it may even go as far as to the misleading appearance of a complete absence of relationship. Thus each human soul will be defined by its location in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, as defined by the degree of development of its wings – a location that is a variation or metamorphosis of the original connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, as specified and determined by what we have seen so far.

The loss of the wings and the fall of the soul from its natural habitat, the sky, marks an extremely important transition in the mythical narrative. What started as a description of the life of the soul while it was flying about in the sky, engaged in its absolute journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, now becomes the story of a soul displaced, exiled, castaway from that same journey. Yet, the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος continues. One still yearns and hungers for it – this remains unchanged. Or, to be more precise, even though the fundamental hunger is not cancelled by the event of the crash, the way in which this hunger is experienced and sought to be sated changes radically. The relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος changes, but it is still there, and it remains the single most important defining factor in the life of the soul.

From the point of view of someone who does not simply take as fact Socrates' statements regarding the nature and the adventures and misadventures of the soul, it is cause for perplexity what those strange creatures supposedly flying about in the sky towards some mysterious and hitherto unknown place have to do with us and the life that we lead. Perhaps the easiest way of dealing with the surprising statements of the second part of the palinode would be to dismiss them as absurd, or merely as a nice story that has nothing significant to tell us about ourselves and our lives. It would certainly make this particular work easier, less bothersome and less demanding not only for its author, but also for its readers. We could stop now, say farewell, exchange our best wishes, and go our separate ways to occupy our time in certainly more enjoyable and perhaps more productive tasks.

That, however, would be a mistake. If we consider once again the distinction between aetiological narrative and aetiological description, we are soon reminded that

what is at stake in this whole mythical account is none other than ourselves – each and every one of us humans that have or will ever live here on earth. The aetiological narrative tells the story of the adventures and misadventures of the ψυχαί, especially human ψυχαί, in their relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος – from their airborne condition, to their exile down here on earth, to their possible return to their initial condition. This narrative ostensively provides a causal explanation for a known state of affairs by means of a myth. The aetiological description, as we have seen before, is contained within the narrative, and does not depend on its truth and accuracy for its validity. It is a description of the state of affairs the narrative claims to provide a causal explanation for. In the case of the second part of the palinode, what is at stake is us: we are what is left of those airborne winged souls that spent their lives travelling to and from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. We are the mutilated fragments of those souls. This means that what Socrates describes in the mythical narrative applies to us in our present life, that it is supposed to explain and describe our own lives. It also means that it contains a specific perspective on our *de facto* condition. In other words, the mythical narrative of the palinode has something, and perhaps something very significant, to tell us about ourselves[349].

What the myth does is explain how we are ἐνθάδε, down here on earth. It comes to do that in a peculiar way. The myth of the palinode is not built from the top down, but from the bottom up. By this we mean that the starting point of the construction of the myth is not what supposedly happens up there in the sky and in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but rather what happens down here on earth, with us. In other words, the way in which the story is constituted is not the way it is told. The narrative is told in such a way that we witness the ups and downs of the lives of the souls from their starting point up there, to ἐνθάδε, where we currently are. But the aetiological significance of this descending itinerary is that it corresponds to a description of different stages of the connection with the superlative. These different stages are characterised by an overlaying of elements of restriction in the relationship with the superlative. But these can be seen from a different angle – and in fact are in the myth itself, when Socrates addresses the possibilities of recovering one's wings. This can be seen from the bottom up: not as elements of restriction added to an original condition exempt from them, but rather as elements of restriction that are from the start determining our *de facto* condition, but that may be

[349] See p. 389, above.

somehow overcome, or, at the very least, that we may feel, in certain circumstances, compelled to try to overcome. The aetiological description that underlies the aetiological narrative takes as its starting point the identification of these restrictions. It is as an explanation of how these restrictions come to be, and to explain how these may perhaps be somehow overcome that the narrative comes into play[350].

But there is another matter we must take into account in this regard. In the terms of the aetiological narrative, the fallen souls are affected by λήθη in such a way as to have lost sight of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and forgotten their very own condition. This means that, in our *de facto* condition, we have no notification of the facts narrated by Socrates. We do not know about the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. From our normal perspective, this, the earth and the sky, is all there is. In other words, the palinode tells us we ourselves are but fragments, and that our own perspective of reality is severely fragmentary – but in such a way that the fragment is taken as absolute. In normal circumstances, by default, we have only access to a corner of the vast world described by Socrates. And yet Socrates – who is, like everyone else, a mere fallen and mutilated soul – pretends to show us the whole universe, pointing out realities that none of us, in our present condition, could be acquainted with. There is, therefore, a tension between the panoramic perspective from which the story is told, and our point of view – a point of view that is fragmentary, but that takes itself as panoramic[351].

[350] In this respect, the aetiological myth of the palinode has the same structure as another aetiological myth in the *corpus Platonicum*: the myth in Aristophanes' speech in the *Symposium*. Similarly to the palinode, Aristophanes' myth describes how the current human condition came to be as the result of a set of gradual changes to an original human nature. But, just like the palinode, underneath this aetiological narrative lies an aetiological description: a specific understanding of the nature of ἔρως and its role in human life, which is the actually starting point of the perspective expressed by the speech. Without being an aetiological myth, the allegory of the cave in *Republic* also shares this same structure, albeit in a peculiar way. Explicitly, it begins at the bottom of the cave, and the reader is then invited to follow the ascent of the released prisoner. But the situation of the prisoners at the bottom of the cave is itself the result of an overlaying of elements of restriction, taking as its starting point our own condition. The "descending journey" that the palinode and Aristophanes' speech describe explicitly is therefore also present in the allegory of the cave, albeit implicitly: it corresponds to a mental journey done by the reader's imagination in order to understand the terms of the allegory.

[351] This apparent contraction of space is also present in both Aristophanes' speech in the *Symposium* and the allegory of the cave in *Republic*. In the former, the whole process that transformed human beings from their original condition to what they are now is covered in λήθη, to such an extent that what remains of that is the mere intimation that is implicit in the nature of ἔρως itself. In the latter, the prisoners at the bottom of the cave have no idea there is a whole world outside; even worse, they do not even know there is anything behind their backs. Their whole world is limited to the space in front of them. It is only when they are released and taken upwards that they realise there is much more beyond.

In this tension we find the suggestion that the story is not built from the point of view of someone who has witnessed it all – as we know Socrates, by the palinode's own terms, has not – but rather from a point of view such as our own. Therefore, the construction of the aetiological narrative presupposes the overcoming of the limitations that affect the normal point of view – the possibility of seeing beyond its confines, of at least stealing a glance of what lies beyond. This overcoming, however, cannot, to use the terms of the myth, consist in having recovered one's wings in full and returned to the sky. The person telling us the story is, after all, good old Socrates, sitting under a plane tree by the Ilisus, who, as far as we know, has never been further away from the earth than the distance he could jump with the strength of his own legs. Neither can this overcoming be the result of some sort of divine revelation, as if Socrates – and us by proxy – were given a glimpse of the truth by some benevolent deity. No mention of such an exalted source is made in the speech, nor even deemed necessary to make the whole mythical narrative more convincing. Rather, the limitations of our point of view are overcome from within – because it is constituted in such a way as to already constitutively be somehow in contact and directed towards that which exceeds itself. We might be living ἐνθάδε, but what the palinode tells us is that ἐνθάδε is defined and determined by its connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Conversely, it is this connection that allows one living ἐνθάδε to have some kind of notification of that great and distant beyond. What we find ἐνθάδε puts us on track to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, albeit in a qualified way.

This is so because our normal point of view is characterised by the circumstance of living beyond its means. In other words, it requires what it cannot provide by itself. It is, in this sense, excessive and extravagant. But this extravagance is not experienced as such. Rather, in most circumstances, our point of view believes it is capable of fulfilling its own requirements and demands, and that, in fact, there is nothing substantial lacking. But the fact is that, like a peculiarly forgetful ruined banker, our point of view's patrimony is mostly debt, even though it is convinced it is prodigiously wealthy. It is this peculiar situation, sc. a point of view that is already in connection with what exceeds it, but that believes to be capable of fulfilling its own demands, that explains how, from our position down here on earth, we could have some kind of notification of something like the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The fact is that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, as we shall see in greater detail, is the projection of the place where our needs and desires find their total and perfect fulfilment. Therefore, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is already somehow present in our

perspective ἐνθάδε: as the correlate of those needs and desires, the representation of the attainment of all that we want and need[352]. This fact is usually hidden from us, and it is

[352] As we have seen before, to reach and enjoy the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the superlative combination of all positive superlatives, is the mythical expression of the human aspiration to fully realise every desire, to have fully and without restriction everything one may need and want. In this respect, the palinode replicates a recurring theme in Ancient comedy, the "comic utopia", in which common human desires, e.g. for plentiful food or sexual gratification, are immediately and easily fulfilled. The result is, appropriately to the genre, overtly ridiculous. This same theme is also present in Aristophanes' speech in the *Symposium*, namely in the superlative abilities of the orbicular original human beings. In the palinode, however, the ridiculous aspect of utopia is absent. See, for example: ZIELINSKI, T., *Die Märchenkomödie in Athen*, St Petersburg, Buchdrukerei der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1885; GRAF, H. E. *Ad aureae aetatis fabulam symbola*, Lipsiae, Typis J. B. 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by uncovering it that one is able to understand what is at stake in Socrates' mythical narrative.

In this regard, the loss of the wings is representative not only of the loss of the ability to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but also of the loss of awareness of that same loss. One is no longer able to fulfil one's fundamental hunger, but one remains oblivious of that fact. The needs and desires that we know here on earth are avatars of this superlative hunger. It is, in this sense, the same superlative hunger that affects and determines us up there in the sky and down here on earth. But here on earth this same hunger assumes a variety of forms, as it is confused with a variety of other desires and is directed towards a multiplicity of different objects. The fundamental hunger for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος does not go away, but as one loses sight of it, this hunger becomes dimmer and is confused with a multiplicity of other desires that act as substitutes for the superlatives we really crave for.

The key to understanding the deflection of the fundamental hunger, and the corresponding variation in the configuration of the ψυχή lies in an aspect that we have so far purposefully understated: the cognitive component of the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The way the text describes the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, albeit vague, and the relationship of the souls with it suggests that the nourishment that the souls hunger so much for is of a cognitive nature. A hint of this may perhaps be found in the fact that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος also goes by another name: πεδίον τῆς ἀληθείας (248b5). This designation is introduced precisely in relation to the nourishing nature of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as an explanation for the eagerness of the souls to reach it. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the place the souls come to feed. The fact that it is qualified in connection with ἀλήθεια seems to suggest that the relationship the souls have with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is of cognitive nature. The winged souls travel to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος in order to contemplate the truth. The description of the procession of the souls also emphasizes the apparently cognitive nature of the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος[353]. It is therefore tempting to interpret what is at stake in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as having everything to do with knowledge.

Symposium. Die Verfassung des Selbst, Würzburg, Königshausen & Neumann, 2009, 77ff., 532ff.

[353] The text is crowded with language related with the act of seeing. The souls of the gods are said to "θεωροῦσι τὰ ἔξω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ" (247c2). Then, the whole description of the gods' direct access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is expressed to a great extent as a vision, through the repeated use of the verbs θεωρεῖν

Another important suggestion of the cognitive nature of the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος can be found in the fact that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is emphatically described as the seat of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα (247c7)[354]. This is an odd and apparently redundant expression, used to describe something equally odd. It is not only something that is, it is something that is characterized especially by the simple fact that it is. It is a being κατ' ἐξοχήν. This is emphasized by the use of the adverb ὄντως. In three single words we find three variations on the verb εἶναι: a noun, an adverb and a participle. This apparently redundant formulation has at least two effects. Firstly, it emphasizes the ontic consistency of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. This is the being that *really* (ὄντως) is. Secondly, the use of ὄντως seems to suggest that there is at least some kind of οὐσία whose εἶναι is not ὄντως, some type of being whose being is less of a being than that of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. It does not necessarily suggest the opposite of being as not being; it suggests something different: the possibility of something whose being is somehow diminished when compared with the full-blown "onticity" of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. In this respect, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος assumes the role of an *ontological ideal*. It corresponds to the superlative in terms of being – it is imperfectible in its ontological consistency.

This *ontological ideal* is one among several of the superlatives that populate the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. It is another one of its inhabitants, another of the superlatives the ψυχαί need and desire. But this specific superlative is different from the others in one important respect: it does not apply simply to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα as such. Rather, it has a distributive nature, contaminating and determining all the other superlatives that are to be found in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This means that ontological purity is a determination that each and every one of the other determinations shares. In other words, what the ψυχαί want is for the other superlatives to be real. Anything less than that and they would be less than superlatives.

To this *ontological ideal* there is a corresponding *cognitive ideal*. This is expressed in the economy of the myth by the gods' easy access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the place where the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is located, the place where truth resides. Later in this chapter we will analyse in detail the different positions in the implicit scale of distance

(247c8, 247d3, 247e2), καθορᾶν (247d5, 247d6), and ἰδεῖν (247d2). To this we may add the repeated connection of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος with ἀλήθεια (247c6, 247c8, 247d3, as well as with cognitive or intellectual "faculties", such as διάνοια (247d1) and ἐπιστήμη (247d1, 247e1). From this derives the strong suggestion that what is at stake in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is something primarily cognitive.

[354] See *supra* p. 397.

and proximity to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος in which souls can be placed. We shall then see that these different positions correlate with different stages of the waxing and waning of the wings, which also correlate with different degrees of λήθη and ἀλήθεια in the soul. For now it suffices to say that the gods are set above and beyond that scale, as the models for the perfect access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, as being whose wings are never at any moment in danger of dwindling, unaffected by λήθη. If true being and the truth reside in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, then the mythical figures who have the unhindered ability to reach it, and whose life is at every moment defined by a journey without obstacles to and from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, will represent the most imperfectible degree of knowledge (247a4ff.)[355]. There is no λήθη for the gods, i.e., there is no restriction between them and the possession of perfect knowledge.

This cognitive ideal corresponds to one of the aspects of the perfect connection the soul may have with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. As with the ontological ideal, it is one of the superlatives that inhabit the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος: the ἐπιστήμη found in the explicit list of superlatives (247d5). This means that the ψυχαί need and want the cognitive ideal along with the multiplicity of other superlatives. But, again with the ontological ideal, as with the ontological ideal, it has a distributive character. This is not an isolated superlative, but one that affects and contaminates the relationship with the other superlatives. The ψυχή, at least in part, wants to have a relationship of pure transparency with all the superlatives that populate the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Together, the cognitive and ontological ideals constitute the correlate of the soul's need for ἀλήθεια: both in the sense of a connection with something that is real, but also that that connection be one of complete transparency. The ψυχαί desire superlatives that are real and with which they have a connection characterised by cognitive perfection. The superlatives the ψυχαί hunger for cannot be mere images or shadows – otherwise, they would not be superlatives[356].

[355] It is noteworthy that the cognitive ideal found in the palinode, represented by the easy and unhindered access by the gods to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, still requires a journey. The gods do not inhabit the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, nor is the contemplation of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα and the feeding on the πεδίον τῆς ἀληθείας a permanent state. The access is intermittent, albeit regular and easy. There is still a degree of distance between the gods and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

[356] We have seen before that the hunger for the superlative combination of all positive superlatives is built in such a way that one desires all the existing positive superlatives together, but each one of them in their pure form, without mixing and mingling. But it is noteworthy that these two superlatives, ontological and cognitive perfection, are apparently the only superlatives that effectively mingle with the other superlatives, thereby constituting an exception to that "rule". This has to do with the "logic" of human desire itself. We

That this corresponds to a radical change in the way we recognise reality and ourselves would go without saying. The palinode introduces a difference between reality as it is commonly known by us, reality ἐνθάδε, and reality as such, as it really is. These are not two separate realities or spheres of reality, isolated from one another, but rather two versions of reality, two ways of understanding reality. One of them, our own version ἐνθάδε, is a partial and distorted version. The other one, albeit presented to us covered in mythical trappings, corresponds to the true version, the one that corresponds to how reality really is.

At the heart of this opposition lies a fundamental structural aspect of our point of view we have already mentioned before: the distinction between content and status. Our point of view contains a multiplicity of contents: this includes everything that we can see, hear, touch; every thought we have; every thesis that makes up our point of view. But this content also has a status, which is distinct from the content itself. This status indicates that the content of one's point of view is true, and that is effectively renders reality as it really is. To use the terms of the myth, the status indicates that the cognitive content corresponds to something like the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, understood as a formal notion: as reality as it really is. The spontaneous tendency of our point of view is to assign this status to the cognitive contents we usually have access to. Some exceptional circumstances notwithstanding, most of what we experience is assumed to be real. This spontaneous assumption, however, is not explicit. It works like an implicit ὑπόθεσις, silently conditioning our point of view.

However, when the version of reality spontaneously endorsed by our point of view ἐνθάδε is submitted to the test, it becomes clear it fails. The content is incapable of fulfilling the requirements of the status commonly attributed to it. By this we do not mean that the world ἐνθάδε lacks reality. What we are dealing with is not the opposition between existence and non-existence. The world ἐνθάδε exists; it is, in this sense, real. What is at stake here is something different: the identity of the determinations that make up the world ἐνθάδε. One of the characteristics of the beings located in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is that their identity is self-contained. By this we mean that each of those beings, e.g., justice itself, has its own identity within itself, without referring to anything else.

do not demand, e.g., that justice and beauty combine (although we want to have both justice and beauty), but justice or beauty that are not real, or that are covered in a deep cognitive mist would fail to be superlatives.

Justice itself is not just on account of anything else: it is justice itself. The multiplicity of beings we have contact with down here on earth, on the other hand, only seem to have this characteristic. In our distracted day-to-day perspective, we deal with these beings as if their identity were self-contained, as if their identity were not dependent on anything else. So we attribute to the beings we deal with ἐνθάδε the same fundamental characteristic of the superlatives.

But, in reality, each determination that we have contact with ἐνθάδε refers back to something else. It is this referential nature of reality down here on earth that is the key to understand the role the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος plays as a constituent of the world ἐνθάδε. Our relationship with these determinations and that to which they refer back to is usually peaceful. That is so because we tend to overlook them, to have a perspective distracted from their referential nature. This, however, changes radically when the relationship with any of them intensifies. Once that happens, the determinations are seen for what they are: not as goals, as endpoints, but rather as points of departure for a journey into an unknown region. They are windows that open into a vast and unknown landscape, not walls that delimitate the space we already inhabit, and believe to be fully known. It is, so to speak, a trampoline: when touched, it sends our point of view somewhere else.

But there is another important aspect in this matter that we must consider. One could suppose that this referential nature of the determinations were such that each determination referred to something that we know and have access to. X might not be self-contained, X might have its identity in Y, but if I have access to Y, then X does not really escape me. But that is not the case. Those determinations refer to something that flees from me, that I cannot grasp. Determinations like justice, for example, are in constant use. A multiplicity of beings and situations are classified as just or its opposite, making use of the determination "justice". The use of this or other determinations as building-blocks of my perspective is seldom the source of any problem. However, once I focus on those determinations, once I pay attention to them, they become opaque, unyielding, in a word, ungraspable. They run away from me. The determinations lead back somewhere, but somewhere I cannot reach. In this, the determinations are like images, in the sense we have already explored in the previous chapter: beings whose identity resides in something else, not in themselves. We think we deal with the things themselves; but what the palinode is saying is that most times we deal only with images.

The world ἐνθάδε is made of images. The determinations that make up the world down here refer away from the beings that we have direct contact with, back to some other place. This other place, in the economy of the palinode, is the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος – which stands for the features that our perspective attributed to the beings ἐνθάδε, but which they actually lack. This is only possible in the context of a distracted connection with the determinations that are the things themselves to the images that constitute our normal point of view. In this sense, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος corresponds to the formal *terminus ad quem* of the referential nature of the determinations that make up the world we inhabit – a *terminus ad quem* that comes to the forefront when the relationship with the things themselves is for some reason intensified. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is how the aetiological myth presents whatever contains the determinations themselves, in their proper identity – whatever that may be. Seen from another angle, this means that the beings found in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, of which we hold nothing but images, are fundamental constituents of the world of images we inhabit. In the same way that the identity of the image resides in the original, the identity of the world ἐνθάδε resides in the superlative combination of all positive superlatives.

However, there is a tendency to *overemphasize* the cognitive component, to the point that it becomes the exclusive object of one's attention, making one lose sight of other (perhaps more important) components. This is a tendency towards reading the relationship the ψυχαί have with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as one akin to the condition of a pure spectator, someone for whom only knowledge and the truth is of any concern. This tendency towards understanding the relationship between the soul and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as primordially cognitive is so strong that it requires correction. We must not forget that in their relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the souls are not akin to uninterested spectators. On the contrary, they yearn for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and need it. The relationship with the truth is not one of mere contemplation. It is rather a passionate relationship, characterised by longing, desire and hunger. It is, in this sense, a φιλοσοφεῖν, an obsessive attachment to ἀλήθεια. Considering the terms in which the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is described, it is natural that one is often tempted to understand it in cognitive terms, as well as the relationship the ψυχαί have with it in mainly, primordially and even exclusively one of φιλοσοφεῖν. That, however, would be a mistake. Φιλοσοφεῖν is one among several other tensions that find their ultimate goal in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, as the determination. Truth, knowledge and ontological perfection, the objects of

φιλοσοφεῖν are not the only superlatives that inhabit the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but rather a few among several others, all of them the object of the fundamental hunger that dominates the life of the ψυχή.

But the cognitive component plays a fundamental role, which not only justifies and explains its protagonism, but also provides us the key to understand, on the one hand, the deflection of the fundamental hunger from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος to other goals, and, on the other hand, how the world ἐνθάδε relates to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This is related to the distributive role we have mentioned the ontological and cognitive ideals play in the superlative combination of positive superlatives. Every desiderative tension is mediated by the cognitive component. Each desiderative tension is accompanied by another specific tension – a tension for ἀλήθεια. By this we mean that no desire for something is simple; rather, each desire is simultaneously a desire for its object to be real, and for the enjoyment of it to be real. This is of the utmost importance. What we want is to really fulfil our needs and desires, not to fulfil them in dreams. I want the object to be real, and I want the enjoyment of it to be real. If I desire X, I want to possess and enjoy X, not a dreamlike version of X, or something other than X posing as X, as a replacement or substitute. Even if this substitute conforms, in every other respect, to what the superlative would be, the simple fact that it lacks the determination ἀλήθεια, in the sense of reality, would be enough for it to be found wanting. And this want in relation to the superlative is a want of momentous consequences. The lack of ἀλήθεια is enough to cancel out every other aspect that would make that particular object desirable. We might not desire something just because it is real, but we need it to be real in order for us to find it desirable. When we consider the matter from this angle, the phrase πεδίον τῆς ἀληθείας as another name for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος acquires a different shade of meaning. It is not just that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is where the determination truth, in its pure and superlative form, resides (which it is), but also that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is place where every single other desirable superlative *really* exists. What the souls hunger for is not just ἀλήθεια, but for all other superlatives in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος to be qualified by ἀλήθεια – in other words, for them to be real.

This puts us on track to understand how the fundamental hunger for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος relates to the multiplicity of desiderative tensions we are the bearers of in our life down here on earth. It allows us to understand especially how these desiderative tensions can at the same time have the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as its true object,

while being directed at objects that are far from the superlative. The crucial aspect is the cognitive component associated with every desiderative tension. Every desiderative tension is the bearer of a thesis regarding its object: *this* is the object of this desiderative tension. This thesis is crucial for the determination of the object, for it to be object of the desiderative tension itself. It is possible, then, for the desiderative tension to miss its mark, to take as its object something different from what it is really directed towards. Instead of keeping its focus on its true superlative object the desiderative tension is deviated towards different, far from superlative, objects. These are replacements or substitutes – but they appear as if they were the true superlative objects. This defect is of a cognitive nature – it is the result of a misidentification, a confusion, of a thesis identifying the object gone wrong. But its effects are desiderative as well, since it leads the desiderative tension away from its true object.

From what we have seen so far, it is clear that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not some distant place that has very little, if anything, to do with us. Rather, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is a fundamental and integral constituent of the world ἐνθάδε. The multiplicity of claims, needs and desires that make up the world ἐνθάδε – and which we normally assume to be fulfilled down here – only find their fulfilment in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος corresponds to the projection of the integral fulfilment of what is demanded and required down here on earth. It is only when we realise that the world down here is lacking, that it is characterised by a fundamental deficit, that we can begin to understand the meaning and significance of what may lie beyond. In the end, there is no need for something like the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος to actually exist for the ontological and anthropological perspectives at stake in the palinode to make sense. It is enough to understand that the world we inhabit and the life that we usually live are the bearers of a multiplicity of claims that they are unable to fulfil, but which are, at the same time, fundamental constituents of reality. These claims cannot be erased or cancelled. They can only be satisfied, and because they demand the superlative, only the superlative, or something disguised as the superlative, can satisfy them. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is the correlate of these demands: the superlative satisfaction of our needs and desires. It may not exist as an actual place, but it still pulls us towards it.

4. The modification of the notion of divine

4.1. Of gods and men

One of the major departures from the traditional conception of the gods is that the gods of the palinode are presented as ψυχαί. The traditional Greek gods, as seen in the Homeric poems and most of the subsequent literary tradition, are described as having, for the most part, human form[357]. This means that they possess a body with a humanoid configuration. They may display some supra-human characteristics, e.g., superior strength and greater size, but they look very much like humans. The palinode, however, does away with that. The gods of the palinode are not anthropomorphic – they are just souls. As such, they are described with the help of the same image used to describe the souls of those who will eventually become humans: as a winged chariot, with its horses and charioteer. The distinction between divine and human souls, in the terms of the allegory of the chariot and the horses, resides in the fact that the gods' chariot is pulled by an unspecified number of integrally good horses, whereas the non-divine souls possess two horses, one good and one bad[358]. This seems to be the main difference between divine and non-divine souls. The differences in fate, in the fact that the journey to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is for the gods always easy, whereas it is hindered for the human ψυχαί, seem to derive from this particular difference in constitution.

The consequences of this difference are momentous, especially for our understanding of human nature, and will be considered in detail later. But the fact that the difference between gods and men is now reduced to what, at first sight, could be understood as a matter of detail has at least one important consequence that Socrates addresses immediately. In fact, this constitutes another major departure from the traditional conception. Traditionally, the difference between men and gods was understood as a difference between mortal and immortal. Of all the characteristics that set human beings and gods apart, immortality is traditionally seen as the most salient. So much so that the word for mortal, θνητός, is often used as a synonym for human being,

[357] There are, however, exceptions to this general trend, namely among the so-called Presocratic philosophers. But even when the "gods" or "god" appears as something very different from the traditional anthropomorphic deities, a critic of the traditional religious beliefs is always implied, when not explicitly stated.

[358] 245a5ff.: "ἐοικέτω δὴ συμφύτῳ δυνάμει ὑποπτέρου ζεύγους τε καὶ ἡνιόχου. θεῶν μὲν οὖν ἵπποι τε καὶ ἡνίοχοι πάντες αὐτοί τε ἀγαθοὶ καὶ ἐξ ἀγαθῶν, τὸ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων μέμεικται. καὶ πρῶτον μὲν ἡμῶν ὁ ἄρχων συνωρίδος ἡνιοχεῖ, εἶτα τῶν ἵππων ὁ μὲν αὐτῷ καλός τε καὶ ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἐκ τοιούτων, ὁ δ' ἐξ ἐναντίων τε καὶ ἐναντίος· χαλεπὴ δὴ καὶ δύσκολος ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἡ περὶ ἡμᾶς ἡνιόχησις."

while the word for immortal, ἀθάνατος, is used in the same way for the gods. Humans are the θνητοί; the gods are the ἀθάνατοι. This is where the main difference is normally considered to lie.

But in the palinode the main difference resides in the peculiar constitution of the ψυχή. How are we then to understand the difference between immortal and mortal, taken as synonyms, respectively, of god and man? In other words, if the non-divine, human, souls are immortal, why do we normally understand the difference between gods and men as being mainly a difference between beings that possess immortality and beings that are, on the contrary, doomed to die? The fact is that they are both normally (i.e., within ancient Greek religions tradition) understood as ζῷα, i.e., as living beings possessing both soul and body[359]. It is in attempting to solve this problem, this tension between an ordinary and socially shared understanding, on the one hand, and a revolutionary and strange perspective introduced in the palinode, on the other, that Socrates first presents us a sketch of the fall of the non-divine souls, and of the process that leads to their subsequent embodiment. If, as the palinode states, human beings possess a body as a result of the fall of their non-divine souls, it is clear that the gods, as souls that have not and cannot fall, are not embodied. The fact that human beings, sc. the ancient Greeks in their traditional religious beliefs, imagine the gods as having a body is due to their ignorance of the gods' true nature[360].

In this we are once again confronted with the contrast between the human being's mistaken conceptions about reality, and the truth that Socrates is revealing to us in his palinode. The gods we imagine to have body and soul, just like us, but, in fact, they are only soul. This ignorance regarding the true nature of the gods reflects a perhaps more serious ignorance regarding our own true nature. The fact that the gods do not have a body, the way in which souls in general, both divine and non-divine, are described, and especially how the relation between body and soul in the embodied human beings is presented suggest that our ordinary understanding of ourselves as a soul within a body, as both body and soul, might be faulty.

[359] 246b5: "πῇ δὴ οὖν θνητόν τε καὶ ἀθάνατον ζῷον ἐκλήθη πειρατέον εἰπεῖν." See THOMPSON, ad locum; DE VRIES, *ad locum*; ROWE, *ad locum*; YUNIS, *ad locum*

[360] 246c5ff.: "ἀθάνατον δὲ οὐδ' ἐξ ἑνὸς λόγου λελογισμένου, ἀλλὰ πλάττομεν οὔτε ἰδόντες οὔτε ἱκανῶς νοήσαντες θεόν, ἀθάνατόν τι ζῷον, ἔχον μὲν ψυχήν, ἔχον δὲ σῶμα, τὸν ἀεὶ δὲ χρόνον ταῦτα συμπεφυκότα."

What the palinode seems to suggest is that having a body is nothing more than an accident, something secondary to our true nature as unembodied non-divine souls. The fact that we have a body and the gods do not may not even be that important. It is not, in any case, the essential difference between them and us. The essential difference resides in the constitution of our souls, and the fact that we, as fallen souls, now possess a body is just an accidental consequence of a mishap caused by that constitutive difference. In this context, even the seemingly simple relation of synonymy between god and immortal, on the one hand, and man and mortal, on the other hand, loses its significance. Both gods and men are actually immortal. Our apparent mortality is in fact just another accidental consequence of the constitutive defect that lead to the fall of our soul and to our embodiment. If death is to be understood, as it is suggested in the *Phaedo*, as the separation between body and soul, it then makes sense that one can only be considered mortal insofar as one has a body[361]. If, in reality, the body is but a vessel, a tomb, a shell in which we have accidentally fallen, and in which we are imprisoned, then it stands to reason that our true nature resides mainly or solely in our ψυχή. If that is the case, then we are not really mortal, but rather immortal as the gods. The difference between mortal and immortal might not become entirely meaningless, but it suffers a radical change.

4.2. A new theology

Before the palinode, gods and men were seen as two opposites: mortal and immortal, powerful and powerless, ruler and ruled. The gods were seen as living a gilded life in which everything comes easy; men, on the other hand, as living a life of hardship and toil. The gods appear not simply as polar opposites of mankind, but rather as beings whose life corresponds to at least a certain conception of what the blessed, happiest life could be, from a human perspective: freedom from death, freedom from want, the possession of incredible power and the means to realize one's whims and desires. In short, a godlike life is a life free from many of the constraints to which human beings are normally bound.

[361] *Phaedo*, 64c4ff.

But in the palinode something new is introduced to us: a new conception of the divine. With this new conception, the gods are displaced from their uppermost position. There is now something above them. Once again we meet a Heraclitian scheme in the palinode, but now applied to gods and humans[362]. The normal, expected relationship between man and gods is disturbed by the introduction of a third element, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

The new element, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, disturbs the normal understanding of the nature of the divine in a very fundamental way. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not just another kind of being to which we can attribute the character of divine. By revealing to us the existence of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, Socrates is not just letting us know that there is another divinity about town, in addition to the countless number of all the others most people in Athens were already acquainted with. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not merely a new god or a previously unknown nymph frolicking in the meadows. Nor is it just another kind of reality "divine" is a proper attribute of, at the same level as the ordinary gods. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, as we have seen when we looked at it from an ontological perspective, is something altogether different and new. It is a novelty that radically changes our understanding of the realities it is related to.

The first aspect of disturbance and change to ordinary theology comes from the fact that the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is set above the known Olympian gods in the scale of divinity, even Zeus himself. If the gods are divine, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is even more so. This could be understood as meaning that there is such a characteristic as "divinity" of which both the gods and ὑπερουράνιος τόπος partake, the difference between them being that the latter partakes of it to a higher degree than the former. This may be somewhat true, but it is just half the story, since the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is explicitly described as that which confers to the divine its divine character (249c5)[363]. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not only more divine than even the gods themselves, but it is also what we could describe as the *archetype of divinity*. The gods are gods because they partake in the divine. But the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is *the divine itself*. The gods are gods because they are able to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

[362] See *supra*, Chapter V, p. 335, n 277.

[363] "διὸ δὴ δικαίως μόνη πτεροῦται ἡ τοῦ φιλοσόφου διάνοια· πρὸς γὰρ ἐκείνοις ἀεί ἐστιν μνήμῃ κατὰ δύναμιν, **πρὸς οἷσπερ θεὸς ὢν θεῖός ἐστιν** [sc. τὰ ὄντα]."

The gods owe their divine nature to this until now unknown reality. To be more precise: the gods are characterized, in contrast with the non-divine souls, by their unrestrained and unhindered ability to access the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This access and this contemplation correspond to a cognitive ideal. They correspond to the highest form of knowledge possible, a form of knowledge that, according to the palinode, is nevertheless out of reach for non-divine souls. This ability to access the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is related to the nature of the divine souls as possessing horses of a homogenously good nature. The horses, the parts of the soul that provide traction and movement, are kind and obedient; they push in the correct direction, either towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος or back to the home of the gods, where Hestia remains. It is this characteristic of the gods that sets the difference from the non-divine souls and that allows them to reach the place they want to reach. But the only purpose and objective of the journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is to reach it. The life of the gods seems to be occupied almost entirely with a cyclical journey to and from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

To these cognitive and teleological subordinations to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the gods add an ontological one. If we believe the apophatic description of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, that, as we have seen inhabits the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and qualifies all the other superlatives that have their place there, as shapeless, colourless, intangible (247c6-7), and if we take seriously the statement that the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is that from which the divine derives its divinity (249c5), one has to face the fact that the gods, as they are described in the palinode, share little of the defining predicates of the divine as such. The gods are in no way described as colourless, shapeless and intangible. Even taking into account that the description of the divine souls as a composite of charioteer plus horses is just an image, one has to admit that, at least, they can be described through some kind of image; there is no image to describe the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. The gods can at least be imagined. This difference in nature, however, is less marked that the difference between the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα and non-divine souls.

One could argue that, in spite of all the differences between the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα and the gods as they are described in the second section of the palinode, the gods are still, in a way, more similar to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα than the third term of the Heraclitian scheme could ever be. They might be imaginable, but they are more homogenous than the non-divine souls, possessing horses with only a good nature. They might be characterized by being in motion, but this motion is of a cyclical and constant nature. This

provides stability to the nature of the gods, a form of variation in the same, which makes them more similar to the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα than non-divine souls, which are subjected to all the injuries and catastrophes described in the palinode, could ever be.

What stands out, however, is that the distance, the abyss between mortals and gods, is also fundamentally changed. Most of that distance is the result of the fall of the non-divine soul. While winged, the non-divine soul will remain close to the gods, resembling them in almost everything. The distance between divine souls and non-divine souls is small, to the point that non-divine souls almost seem like second rate gods[364]. But the introduction of a higher level of divinity changes the conception of the gods even more. If the gods are now somewhat closer to men, they are also put at some distance from the seat of true divinity. The divine character of the gods is not understood as substantial: divine is not what belongs to the gods, but rather what makes the gods be gods. There is a priority of τὸ θεῖον, the divine, the godly, over the notion of θεός, god. This move does not stretch the concept of god beyond recognition, however. Θεός, in Wilamowitz-Moellendorf's happy formulation, is a "Prädikatsbegriff", or, in Verdenius' even happier formulation, "Der griechische Gott ist nicht göttlich, weil er Gott ist, sondern er is Gott, weil er etwas Göttliches ist"[365].

The palinode is a perfect example of the versatility of the term θεός, and how the divine can be attributed to a variety of beings without doing too much violence to the meaning of the term. Verdenius goes as far as to read the palinode as establishing a scale of divinity[366]. The organising principle of this scale is the proximity to the pinnacle of divinity, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The "traditional" gods are gods as they have perfect and easy access to what is superlatively divine. The winged non-divine souls, on the other hand, are inferior to the gods because of their difficulty in reaching the ὑπερουράνιος

[364] 246e5: "τῷ δ᾽ ἕπεται στρατιὰ θεῶν τε καὶ δαιμόνων". The identity of the δαίμονες is unclear. DE VRIES, ad locum, explains that these are "all the non-divine souls", which will include the future human beings i.e. the fallen non-divine souls. ROWE, ad locum, translates δαίμονες as a synonym of θεοί. YUNIS argues that the δαίμονες are "the innumerable local gods and lesser divinities who inhabit all corners of the Greek world". This might also be an allusion to Empedocles' δαίμων (DK 115), who, like the fallen souls of the palinode, is a fallen being exiled in earth. See also SALA, 171.

[365] See WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORF, U., *Der Glaube der Hellenen*, Berlin, Weidmann, 1931, 18-19; ROSE, H., CHANTRAINE, P., SNELL, B., GIGON, O., KITTO, H., CHAPOUTHIER, F., VERDENIUS, W., *La Notion du Divin depuis Homère*, Entretiens sur L'Antiquité Classique I, 8-13 September 1952, Genève, Genève, Fondation Hardt Vandoeuvres, 1954, 244. See also: CAMP, J., CANART, P., *Le Sens to Mot ΘΕΙΟΣ chez Platon*, Louvain, Bibliotheque de l'université, Bureaux du recueil, 1956, 110-115.

[366] Cf. ROSE et al., *op. cit.*, 254ff.

τόπος. This is due to a slight difference in nature that, however, has important consequences. The forces that provide traction to the souls, the horses, are, in the case of the gods homogenously good and obedient; in the case of the non-divine souls, they are heterogeneous: one is good, the other is bad. This hippic heterogeneity introduces an important element of imperfection, and is a cause of the possible fall. The difference between the souls after their fall and the gods is much wider: the mobility of the fallen souls is reduced; they are unable to fly; their perspective is completely limited and deformed by their *de facto* condition.

In either state, however, the human soul still has some kind of connection to the divine, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The non-divine soul in the sky has seen it in some way at least once; there was direct contact with it. The soul in its fallen state keeps a connection to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through ἀνάμνησις. This is a much weaker connection, but it is still there and some events are able to rekindle the connection and make it stronger. In any case, there is a contact with the highest of the divine with little intervention from the gods. These serve as guides, but it is not from the contemplation of the gods that the human souls derive their spark of divinity; it is from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος itself. The introduction of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as the third term in this Heraclitian scheme signifies that the gods, like humans, lack self-sufficiency, αὐτάρκεια. The gods, like the winged non-divine souls, are set in an absolute journey to and from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. They are only gods insofar as they are constituted in such a way as to have easy and unhindered access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The very divinity of the gods depends on something else – and this is the exact opposite of αὐτάρκεια.

Man might be the third term in this scheme, but it is not diminished by it. Man is as dependent of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as any god, as subordinate to it as any god. Insofar as human souls are able to access or have some form of connection to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, they will have in themselves something of the divine. The difference, after all, between gods and men will be one of degree of divinity, not a difference between possession and lack of that attribute. And even after the fall and loss of wings, the non-divine, now embodied souls, still retain a weak link to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through ἀνάμνησις. Even after the fall, something godly remains in us.

The traditional Homeric perspective on the nature of the gods describes them as beings far superior to mankind. They stand high above. They are much more powerful,

exceedingly more beautiful, almost invulnerable to the evils that normally affect mankind. They are impervious to disease, famine and death. They might not be morally superior to mankind, since they act mostly according only to their wishes and whims, but their divine status puts them so much above all rules of human behaviour that any kind of censure for their acts is so useless to the point of being ridiculous. They are like the masters to their human slaves; and humans behave towards them as slaves would towards capricious masters, by trying to fall into their good graces, to avoid their wrath, and getting away with what they can. The position of the gods is defined by their superiority over men, their ability to exercise power over them and the fact that they are invulnerable to most ills that ache mankind.

But what we have seen so far in the second section of the palinode is very different. The gods play a completely different role: they are now guides the lead the non-divine souls towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, not whimsical tyrants. They are different in nature: they are described in terms similar to the non-divine souls, with a small but important difference, the nature of the horses. And the divinity of the gods is no longer their own; it actually belongs to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. It is the proximity and access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος that now defines the gods as divine. The divine is no longer understood in terms of power over the ἀμηχανία that characterizes mankind, but in terms of ontological and cognitive perfection. In this sense, the divine rightly belongs to that which is described as the model of this perfection, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The gods correspond to the ideal form of relationship with the superlative, which is now, in this new understanding of the divine, the true divine.

Human beings therefore somehow partake in the divinity through their contact with the superlative. Before the fall, human souls will be closer to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, directly accessing the superlatives, albeit with some difficulty and in an intermittent way. After the fall, human beings are always connected to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through the lifeline that is ἀνάμνησις. In any of these conditions, human beings partake in some degree of the divine. This alters and somehow reduces the abysm that is usually put between gods as exceedingly powerful beings and humans as their subjects and preferred targets. The gods are more divine. They are closer to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. They serve as guides to the human souls. But both gods and humans strive towards the same goal, both need to contemplate the same divine beings, both are defined not by

their relationship with each other, but by the relationship that they share with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

What is clear from this is that, even if the gods are described in the palinode as guiding human souls towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the connection with ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is direct, without any need for an intermediary. That is to say that the connection human beings have with the superlative is direct and does not require any godly mediation.

5. Anthropological changes. "Human condition" and its constitutive proximity and distance to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος

So far in this study we have outlined an interpretation of the myth of the second part of the palinode that attempts to reveal the aetiological description underneath the mythical narrative. What we will be doing in the next few pages is revisit some particular aspects of this interpretation and look into them in more detail. In this regard, this next section will have a somewhat complementary nature: it will add to and deepen our understanding of what is at stake in our interpretation, without, however, changing it in any significant way. The main purpose of this section is to consolidate our interpretation by dealing with some difficulties and possible points of contention.

We must, however, anticipate a potential objection. The fact is we will not be covering all the aspects that make up the mythical narrative, nor will we be addressing all the problems concerning this particular speech that decades and indeed centuries of scholarship have identified and discussed. We will not take into account the whole cornucopia of mythical elements and their particular significance for the perspective on the human condition at stake in the palinode. Many of the mythical elements will be put aside. We consider that many of these elements, e.g., some of the details of the journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the cycles of birth or rebirth or the exact terms of the "scale of lives", function as mere mythical ingredients in a text that, taken at its face value, claims to be a cosmological description. They constitute marks of the literary genre adopted by Plato to put forward the peculiar perspective the palinode is the bearer of. By this we mean that not all of the mythical elements can be deciphered in such a way as to reveal the aetiological description that lies underneath the mythical narrative. This is of

course an interpretative decision, and, as such, it is open to debate. One would perhaps object that, by putting aside some of the mythical elements, our interpretation will be poorer and lack the persuasiveness that a hypothetical "complete" reading, sc. one that accounts for all details, would have. But the fact is that the idea that all the elements are relevant is as much an interpretative decision as the one we have made. There are many paths in this labyrinth, many points of entry and many ways one can go. It is impossible to be sure from the start which of the paths are better and which are worse. The merits of any interpretation can only be assessed by its results.

5.1. Revisiting the winged chariot: the complexity of human nature

The first set of aspects we are going to focus on have to do with what we have previously identified as the second layer of the stratigraphic structure of the palinode. We have seen before that the intrinsic desiderative tension towards the superlative interacts, influences and is influenced and conditioned by what is presented in the myth as the peculiar composition of the ψυχή[367]. This peculiar composition of the ψυχή, symbolised by the chariot in the myth, allows for the presence of an element other than the connection with the superlative to play a role in defining human condition. This means that, as far as the aetiological description is concerned, human nature can be understood as the unity of heterogeneous elements: on the one hand, the connection with the superlative, on the other hand, a desiderative tension towards a multiplicity of other inferior goals. This peculiar constitution of human nature we have expressed by means of a formula that tries to summarize the multiplicity of elements, both constant and variable, that result in what we normally recognize as human beings. Later on we will consider the peculiar ways in which the diverging tensions that are part of human nature interact, and we will see how, in certain circumstances, they might even be in agreement with each other.

For now, however, we should consider the peculiar composition of the ψυχή, as described in the mythical narrative. The composite nature of the soul is described in allegorical or mythical terms, apparently due to the difficulty in using any other kind of language to describe a reality like this. In 246a4-6, we find a contrast between the divine and long account of "οἷον ἐστιν" and the human and brief account of "ᾧ ἔοικεν". This

[367] See above p. 437ff.

contrast between what the soul *is* and what it *resembles* (the chariot with its charioteer and horses) is something we must not forget. The soul is said to resemble this image, with all the limitations that are implied in any kind of resemblance, as opposed to a perfect correspondence. This is an image that tries to express the nature of the human ψυχή. In other words, it tries to show what each of us really is. And yet, it can only give us an approximation – there will always be something lacking and mismatched. This means that what we are is something that we ourselves cannot, in normal circumstances, understand without the mediation of an image. What we really are is hidden from us, to a very large extent. Or, seen from another angle, we are in such a situation that we are unable to grasp what we really are without the use of allegorical or mythical language. And yet, this very circumstance invites the reader to try to decipher the mythological language and at least try to get as close as possible to the οἷον ἐστιν that is expressed through this image. We might not really be winged chariots with these characteristics, our nature might be but imperfectly rendered by this simile, and yet this is an image that, at least according to Socrates, shows us something about ourselves – and that, if properly analysed and deciphered, can show us something about what we are.

The significance of the different elements that are said to compose the ψυχή, as well as how they relate to each other, is therefore something we must try to ascertain. The first of these elements is the charioteer. He is the first because, as we have seen before, he naturally has the leading role in the whole complex. This is clear from the logic of the image itself. But this also becomes clear when we consider some other aspects. In the case of human souls, we have seen that the charioteer is described as the only element of the soul that actually can have some sort of direct contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος (248a2) – even if it is possible that he is not the only who hungers for it[368]. This contact, albeit sporadic, intermittent and difficult to achieve, is an aspect that shows us the superiority of the figure of the charioteer over the other elements of the chariot image in the economy of the palinode. If, as we have seen, reaching the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος corresponds to the *terminus ad quem* of the whole existence of the souls, then all the effort the charioteer and the horses have to expend has only one aim: to allow the charioteer access to the beings that reside there. The charioteer is at the centre of all the efforts of the whole soul to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The fact that the leading element of the

[368] "αἱ δὲ ἄλλαι ψυχαί, ἡ μὲν ἄριστα θεῷ ἑπομένη καὶ εἰκασμένη ὑπερῆρεν εἰς τὸν ἔξω τόπον τὴν τοῦ ἡνιόχου κεφαλήν"

ψυχή, the charioteer, is the only one that might contact directly with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος suggests something curious about the understanding of human nature at play in the palinode: that the connection with the superlative has primacy over the other possible desiderative tensions.

But there is yet another aspect we need to consider. If the charioteer is the only element of the non-divine souls that is able to get at least a glimpse of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and if, as it is said in 247c7-8, this is only visible to νοῦς, then it is possible to identify the figure of the charioteer with νοῦς. Noῦς itself is referred to in the same passage as the ψυχής κυβερνήτης, the pilot of the soul, a description that fits the figure of a charioteer very well[369]. Since the charioteer is identified with the νοῦς, it becomes clear that this is the part of the ψυχή that can at least approach what we have described as the cognitive ideal. The fact that the charioteer is the only element that has direct contact with the truth also suggests that there is an intimate connection between the hunger for the superlative and the access to the truth. This connection has several aspects. We have already observed that both the cognitive and the ontological ideals are among the superlatives that human beings aspire to. We also saw that these superlatives have the peculiar property of being distributive: if they were not to share the characteristics of the cognitive and ontological ideals, the other superlatives would be less than superlatives. That is to say that any superlative desired by the human beings are desired inasmuch as they are real and susceptible of being known. But there is yet another aspect to this connection between the hunger for the superlative and the truth. This hints at the fact that any desiderative tension is accompanied by a thesis that declares that *this* is the object that this specific tension. In other words, every need and desire brings within itself a truth claim regarding the reality and the aptness of its object. The suggestion is then clear: to want, need and desire the superlative is the best, and most real form of desire there is.

What the palinode tells us, however, is that the hunger for the superlative might have primacy, but it still has to deal with a multiplicity of other possible desiderative tensions. In the terms of the image of the chariot, this is expressed by the circumstance in which the charioteer finds himself: bound and stuck to two strange and very different beings, the horses. The horses are powerful beings that have the strength to pull in a

[369] "ἡ γὰρ ἀχρώματός τε καὶ ἀσχημάτιστος καὶ ἀναφὴς οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, ψυχῆς κυβερνήτῃ μόνῳ θεατὴ νῷ"

different direction from the one set by the charioteer. The direction of the whole chariot is the result of the interaction of the charioteer's driving and the horses' pull. But as they are autonomous beings, capable of pulling in a direction different from the one set by the charioteer, they have to be controlled and tamed. Despite the fact that the two horses are much stronger than the charioteer, he still has the ability to drive the chariot. The physical strength of the horses can be subdued by the ability and skill of the charioteer. In this regard, however, the two horses differ significantly from each other. One of the horses is described as being good and obedient; the other has the opposite nature. The good horse is easy to direct. The charioteer orders, the horse obeys. The harmony between the leading element and this horse is perfect. The soul yearns to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The charioteer, the element that, in the end, will be the only one able to contemplate the superlatives, directs the soul towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The good horse obeys the charioteer and applies all its strength to that task.

In the case of the non-divine souls, the heterogeneous nature of the horses makes steering the chariot all the more difficult. One of the horses is described, in quite emphatic terms, as "καλός τε καὶ ἀγαθὸς καί ἐκ τοιούτων" (246b2); the other is described in opposite terms[370]. It is further added that guiding this second horse is necessarily ("ἐξ ἀνάγκης") difficult and troublesome (246b3-4). One of the horses always obeys the charioteer. It is a form of traction whose orientation corresponds exactly to the one assigned by the element of the soul that provides leadership. The other horse does not obey the charioteer easily. It resists the charioteer's orders and goes in a different direction. It is this horse that makes steering difficult. At the same time that the charioteer has to provide direction to the chariot, he has also to deal with a horse that pulls the chariot in a different direction. By virtue of the fact that every element of the soul is interrelated, if one of them pulls in a different direction, this necessarily implies that the unruly element is trying to force upon the whole soul a different orientation from that which is provided by the leading element. This unruly aspect of the ψυχή introduces an element of

[370] 246b2ff.: "εἶτα τῶν ἵππων ὁ μὲν αὐτῷ καλός τε καὶ ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἐκ τοιούτων, ὁ δ' ἐξ ἐναντίων τε καὶ ἐναντίος: χαλεπὴ δὴ καὶ δύσκολος ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἡ περὶ ἡμᾶς ἡνιόχησις". See also 253d1ff.: τῶν δὲ δὴ ἵππων ὁ μέν, φαμέν, ἀγαθός, ὁ δ' οὔ: ἀρετὴ δὲ τίς τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἢ κακοῦ κακία, οὐ διείπομεν, νῦν δὲ λεκτέον. ὁ μὲν τοίνυν αὐτοῖν ἐν τῇ καλλίονι στάσει ὢν τό τε εἶδος ὀρθὸς καὶ διηρθρωμένος, ὑψαύχην, ἐπίγρυπος, λευκὸς ἰδεῖν, μελανόμματος, τιμῆς ἐραστὴς μετὰ σωφροσύνης τε καὶ αἰδοῦς, καὶ ἀληθινῆς δόξης ἑταῖρος, ἄπληκτος, κελεύσματι μόνον καὶ λόγῳ ἡνιοχεῖται: ὁ δ' αὖ σκολιός, πολύς, εἰκῇ συμπεφορημένος, κρατεραύχην, βραχυτράχηλος, σιμοπρόσωπος, μελάγχρως, γλαυκόμματος, ὕφαιμος, ὕβρεως καὶ ἀλαζονείας ἑταῖρος, περὶ ὦτα λάσιος, κωφός, μάστιγι μετὰ κέντρων μόγις ὑπείκων."

disharmony to the whole complex. The whole does not respond harmoniously to the directions of the leading part of the soul. There is an element of disturbance, of unruliness that is an essential part of the non-divine souls.

The inclusion of the bad horse in the image of the soul shows us that, according to the palinode, human souls are not only constitutively complex, but also, in a way, constitutively flawed. They contain within themselves two divergent tendencies: one, the yearning to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, a constitutive desire for the superlative; the other, an impulse towards something altogether different, that distracts from that goal. In a context where the hunger for the superlative is seen as the fundamental characteristic of human nature, as the best and worthiest goal, having within oneself the tension towards something very different is naturally seen as a serious flaw. This tension that hinders and opposes the tension for the superlative is not something that, to use the terms of the myth, comes to be as a result of the fall or the embodiment of the ψυχή; it is rather an element of disturbance that is present in the ψυχή at all times. It is an intrinsic, constitutive and irremovable tendency towards something other than the superlative[371].

By drawing parallels with *Republic*, one would perhaps conclude that the good horse is a metaphor for the θυμοειδές and the bad horse for the ἐπιθυμητικόν, with the charioteer corresponding to the λογιστικόν[372]. This identification may seem relatively plausible, not only because the model of the palinode seems to be tripartite as well, but also because, later on in the palinode (253d6), the good horse is described in terms that seem to confirm its identification with the θυμοειδές. In fact, the good horse is described as "τιμῆς ἐραστὴς μετὰ σωφροσύνης τε καὶ αἰδούς". As for the bad horse, the identification with the ἐπιθυμητικόν is rendered plausible not only by the later passage (254aff.) where its reaction to the presence of the beloved is described in terms of sexual

[371] The peculiarity of this becomes all the more evident when seen in contrast with the fundamental theological difference present in the palinode: the fact that the gods have at all times and in all circumstances an unhindered access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This is associated with the homogeneous nature of the horses that pull the divine chariot. In other words, the gods are gods because they have a permanently and constitutively easy access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and this is due to the fact that there is no intrinsic element of disturbance – no rival desiderative tension to the hunger for the superlative.

[372] See *Republic* IV, 439d5ff. See also *Republic* IX, 480d1ff. In this later passage, we find the identification of each of the three parts with different forms of vital orientation: ἐπιθυμητικόν is identified with φιλοχρήματον and φιλοκερδός, θυμοειδές is identified with φιλόνικον and φιλότιμον, and λογιστικόν with φιλομαθές and φιλόσοφον. That is to say that each part of the soul has the ability to try to pull the whole into a specific direction, towards its own specific goals. In other words, each part of the soul is the bearer of a specific form of attachment to a specific kind of object, and the opposition between them lies in the fact that each tries to lead the whole towards the attainment and enjoyment of those specific objects.

desire (254a6-7), but also by the fact that he is referred to by Socrates as "ὕβρεως τε καὶ ἀλαζονείας ἑταῖρος" (253e2), which immediately brings to mind the concept of ὕβρις as the supremacy of ἐπιθυμία in Socrates' first speech.

However, such identification is problematic. In the first place, the good horse does not seem to act as an independent agent in the palinode. It possesses strength and is able to pull the chariot, but only in the direction set by the charioteer. This happens not as a result of coercion and violence, as when the bad horse is put in its place, but because there is perfect harmony between the aims of the charioteer and the aims of the good horse. In *Republic*, it is the fact that one part of the soul can be set in opposition to the others, and try to take over the whole and set its own vital orientation that allows Socrates to distinguish each of them from the rest. It is the experience of conflict that brings to the forefront the parts of something that, in other circumstances, appears only as a unified and undifferentiated whole. If the θυμοειδές were, like the good horse, obedient at all times to τὸ λογιστικόν, then it would be in practice indistinguishable from it. What remains clear, however, is the dynamic relationship between the different aspects of the ψυχή, as it is described in the palinode. The so-called tripartition, in the case of the *Phaedrus*, works from the start in a very different way. In spite of the fact that there are three differentiated elements composing the ψυχή, the conflict is only between two parties: the party that strives towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, i.e., the good horse that pulls towards it and the charioteer that steers the whole soul in that direction, and the party that pulls in different directions, i.e., the bad horse[373].

The same is to say that there is a faction within the soul that yearns for the superlative, and strives to reach it; but there is also a faction that resists this movement.

[373] Cf. *Phaedo*, 68b8ff.: "Οὐκοῦν ἱκανόν σοι τεκμήριον, ἔφη, τοῦτο ἀνδρός, ὃν ἂν ἴδῃς ἀγανακτοῦντα μέλλοντα ἀποθανεῖσθαι, ὅτι οὐκ ἄρ' ἦν φιλόσοφος ἀλλά τις φιλοσώματος; ὁ αὐτὸς δέ που οὗτος τυγχάνει ὢν καὶ φιλοχρήματος καὶ φιλότιμος, ἤτοι τὰ ἕτερα τούτων ἢ ἀμφότερα." For the parallel in *Republic* IX, see note 362, above. See ARCHER-HIND, *ad locum*; ROWE, *ad locum*. In this passage of the *Phaedo* the opposition between φιλοσοφία as an existential orientation and the other forces is drawn differently from the model of the *Phaedrus*. The main difference is the alignment of the faction that appears to correspond to φιλοτιμία in the *Phaedrus*: the good horse. Whereas in the Phaedrus the philotimic component is always aligned with the philosophical component, in the *Phaedo* it aligns with the supposed counterpart of the bad horse – the φιλοχρήματος component. Together they form the φιλοσώματος: an anti-philosophical (in this peculiar sense) coalition. These two possible alignments of the philotimic component might mean that this is a component that is incapable of setting its own course alone. Thusly, without the guidance of the philosophical component, it will be taken in by the φιλοχρήματος existencial orientation. In short, it would be doomed to ever remain a junior party in whatever coalition it might be. However, this apparent incongruity might not have any kind of doctrinal significance, so to speak. It might have been included as a form of "irritant", as a purposeful inconsistency with the objective of stimulating the reader to consider the matter by him or herself.

But the elements of the faction that strives towards the superlative have a different relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Only the charioteer is actually capable of reaching the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and contemplating the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. In its original condition, the charioteer is the only part of the soul that has a truly cognitive relationship with reality as it really is. The good horse does not contact the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος directly, and plays a merely ancillary role in the journey towards it.

Secondly, it is not altogether clear if what the good horse strives for is something akin to the φιλόνικον and φιλότιμον of *Republic* IX. The good horse is described as "ἀληθινῆς δόξης ἑταῖρος" (253d7). This expression has been interpreted in two different ways: Ast, Robin, Ritter and Rufener think ἀληθινὴ δόξα is the equivalent of ἀληθής δόξα; others, including Hackforth, de Vries, Heitsch, Rowe and Yunis interpret this phrase as meaning something like "true renown", "true glory", "true reputation"[374]. If the first interpretation is correct, the good horse is described not as a ἑταῖρος of true knowledge as such, as the knowledge found in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but as a ἑταῖρος of an inferior form of contact with truth[375]. The good horse might be in perfect harmony with the charioteer in their journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but the good horse has but an indirect contact with the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα. This would be a δόξα that hits the mark, but might have a partial and distorted view and understanding of what that may be. If, however, the second interpretation is the correct one, this provides an argument in favour of the identification of the good horse with the element of the soul that is attached to glory and reputation, the φιλοτιμία of *Republic* IX. However, the reference to truth in this context is still of great importance: the δόξα (in the sense of renown) the horse yearns for has to be based on truth. In either case, the connection of the good horse with truth is made explicit: he wants it and needs it, but can only have an indirect contact with it through the charioteer.

The bad horse, on the other hand, has an even more distant relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Not only is he said to be attached to things that seem to partake very little of it, e.g., ὕβρις, ἀλαζονεία, and, as the context clearly suggests, τὰ ἀφροδίσια, but it is also the element of the soul that actually hinders the journey towards the

[374] See AST, *ad locum*; RITTER, *ad locum*; ROBIN, *ad locum*; HACKFORTH, 103ff.; RUFENER, R. (ed.), *Platon: Meisterdialoge. Phaidon. Symposion. Phaidros*, Zürich, Artemis-Verlag, 1958, *ad locum*; DE VRIES, *ad locum*; ROWE, *ad locum*; HEITSCH, *ad locum*; YUNIS, *ad locum*. See also FERRARI, 200ff.
[375] Cf. the τροφή δοξαστή of 248b5, i.e. the substitute nourishment of the souls that fail to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

ὑπερουράνιος τόπος (253e1ff.; 254a2ff.). One should note, however, that the bad horse is not explicitly and purposefully opposing the journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. At no point does he seem to actually intend to prevent the soul from reaching it. The bad horse rather seems to represent those desires that stray away from human soul's intrinsic hunger for the superlative, and, by doing that, represent an obstacle to what, according to the palinode, is the fundamental mission: to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

5.2. Mobility and factors of limitation of mobility: the wings and the weight

In our previous presentation of the stratigraphic structure of the palinode, we considered the significance of the wings and saw how they confer superlative mobility to the ψυχή. The superlative mobility conferred by the wings translates into the possibility of reaching anywhere, into the absence of any limits to where the soul can travel. The range of movement of the ψυχή is virtually limitless. To have wings also indicates that one's natural dwelling is not down here on earth, but in the sky. But the superlative mobility of the wings, associated with their superlative strength, allows the ψυχή to go even beyond the sky and reach the absolute upper limit of reality, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. But what is at stake here is more than just the ability to reach the absolute above. The wings are more than just instruments: they represent something like an inverted gravity, the tendency for the ψυχή to go up towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. They are at the same time the conditions of possibility of reaching the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and fulfilling the fundamental hunger the ψυχαί have for it, as well as the representation of that same hunger, of the defining connection each ψυχή has with the superlative. A winged ψυχή is a ψυχή that is intrinsically connected with the superlative in these two aspects: it has the potential to reach it, and it is defined by the tension towards it. The ψυχή is not merely capable of reaching the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος: the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is where the ψυχή belongs.

As we have seen when we considered the formula of human nature, this means that human beings have an intrinsic vocation for the superlative combination of all positive superlatives. Human beings yearn and hunger for the superlative; but – and this is at least what the palinode seems to be telling us about human nature – they also somehow possess the potential to achieve it. They are capable of the superlative.

Or so it would seem, if the wings were the only force in action. As the wings move the soul ἄνω, there is another force that pushes the soul κάτω – a force the wings have to counteract. This force is described by Socrates as "τὸ ἐμβριθές", the heavy, the weight[376]. This force seems to follow the action of the wings everywhere, countering its effect. It consists in a force that pulls the soul downwards towards the earth and away from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This puts the soul in the awkward situation of being pulled in opposite directions by counteracting forces: the wings pulling ἄνω and the weight pulling κάτω. This dynamic relation between wings and weight is one of the most important factors that define the situation of the soul. The action of the wings does not cancel the action of the weight; it rather compensates it. Even a successful journey to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος cannot cancel the action of the weight; it is a permanent feature of the non-divine souls.

The significance of this should not be underestimated. The same soul that contains the superlative potential to reach everywhere, even the highest of the high, the same soul that tends towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, that yearns and hungers for it, this same soul is nonetheless also affected by a force that pulls in the opposite direction, that limits and constrains the action of the wings. The superlative potential of the wings has to deal with an intrinsic and constitutive limitation. When we consider the interaction between these two forces, we are able to understand better how the winged and sky-dwelling human souls are suspended between the earth and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The wings pull them upwards, which is where they need and yearn to be; but the weight pulls them downwards, to where they are at every time in risk of falling. Both these forces are intrinsic and irremovable.

But the existence of the wings in their perfect form is, in contrast with the existence of the weight, conditional. It depends on the successful completion of the journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος (248b5ff.). The original condition of the non-

[376] The weight explicitly appears as a factor in the destiny of the ψυχή in three separate passages. In two of them we find the verb "βαρύνειν", "to weigh down", instead of τὸ ἐμβριθές. The first of these passages tells us about the general principle that describes the interaction between wings and weight (246d6): "πέφυκεν ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις τὸ ἐμβριθὲς ἄγειν ἄνω μετεωρίζουσα ᾗ τὸ τῶν θεῶν γένος οἰκεῖ". The second passage focuses on a specific element of weight, the bad horse, that constitutes an obstacle to the journey upwards of the soul (247b3ff.): "βρίθει γὰρ ὁ τῆς κάκης ἵππος μετέχων, ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ῥέπων τε καὶ βαρύνων ᾧ μὴ καλῶς ἦν τεθραμμένος τῶν ἡνιόχων.". Finally, we are shown the key role the weight plays in the story, pulling the soul downwards into earth, when the wings fail to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος (248c7ff.): "ὅταν δὲ ἀδυνατήσασα ἐπισπέσθαι μὴ ἴδῃ, καί τινι συντυχίᾳ χρησαμένη λήθης τε καὶ κακίας πλησθεῖσα βαρυνθῇ, βαρυνθεῖσα δὲ πτεροῤῥυήσῃ τε καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν πέσῃ".

divine souls is such that they need to possess wings in order to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and they need to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος in order to be able to keep their wings in their full form. While the wings are in their full force, the ψυχή is able to stay airborne, and the effect of the weight is compensated and overcome by the superlative strength of the wings. But, as we have seen before, the wings wax and wane, and may go through different stages of development. Diminished or weakened wings are not able to overcome the weight – which will gain the upper hand and cause the ψυχή to crash into earth.

One might perhaps observe that the presence of this new factor of restriction adds complexity to the model of multiple traction that we have already identified in the composition of the ψυχή. To the three forces that constitute the ψυχή, the charioteer and the two horses, together with the connection to the superlative, symbolised by the wings, one would add yet another element, the weight. The ψυχή's movement would then be under the influence of the charioteer and the two horses, but also of the wings, that pull it upwards, and the weight, that pull it downwards. This, however, is not as straightforward as one might think. In fact, we have already observed that it is not at all clear if the connection with the superlative corresponds to a fourth element in the system of forces, or if it can be identified with the charioteer. Rather than understanding the weight as yet another element within a crowded system of forces, we might perhaps consider it from a different angle. The weight corresponds to the generic, abbreviated and comprehensive designation of all the factors that restrict the connection with the superlative. As this connection is expressed through metaphors of movement (the feeding metaphor notwithstanding), and specifically of upwards movement, it makes sense to use the weight as the metaphorical expression of whatever happens to oppose or hinder that connection. And so as the wings symbolise the connection with the superlative, and the different degrees of development of the wings symbolise different degrees of this same connection, so does the weight symbolise in generic terms all possible restrictions to the connection with the superlative.

Seen from this angle, we can begin to understand how this might relate with the image of the chariot. The composition of the ψυχή is itself, as we have observed before, a limitation of the connection with the superlative. That is to say that the connection with the superlative has to deal with a plurality of other forces intervening in and influencing the direction of the ψυχή. That this might be understood as a kind of weight is suggested

by the fact that the chariots that have a bad horse, i.e., the human souls, are said to be heavy and weighted down towards the earth[377]. This suggests an identification between the weight and the bad horse, or, perhaps more accurately, that the presence of the bad horse is one of the factors that can be described as a form of weight. Within the aetiological narrative, this happens to be a constitutive form of weight, as opposed to forms of weight that, as we shall see, can be described as being supervenient or acquired, in the terms of the mythical narrative[378].

The very presence of something like the weight means that the potential to achieve the superlative is somewhat conditioned by limitations, some of them at least intrinsic and constitutive. Human nature is such that it is drawn towards the superlative, and seems to have the ability to reach it in some way. And yet, at the same time, within human nature itself this ability is hindered by intrinsic limitations. Some of these limitations are intrinsic, constitutive, always present – as much so as the vocation for the superlative. The human condition is therefore at the crossroads of these two opposing tendencies, and is always under the influence of both. Human beings can therefore be understood as those beings that have a vocation for the superlative – but a vocation that is hindered, and even thwarted but a multiplicity of intrinsic factors of limitation.

5.3. An overlaying of factors of limitation: restrictions to the soul's mobility and the scale of lives

The permanent and intrinsic tension between these two tendencies is translated, in the terms of the mythical narrative, into a multiplicity of factors of limitation to the superlative mobility of the ψυχαί. These factors have a cumulative effect: as more and more factors of limitation are added, the more hindered the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος will be, and the more difficult it will be to re-establish the original connection with it. Seen from the top down, i.e., following the order by which the mythical narrative presents them, these factors of limitation appear in the form of a series of mishaps that result in the ψυχαί crashing into earth and getting stuck here. But seen

[377] 247b3ff.: "βρίθει γὰρ ὁ τῆς κάκης ἵππος μετέχων, ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ῥέπων τε καὶ βαρύνων ᾧ μὴ καλῶς ἦν τεθραμμένος τῶν ἡνιόχων."
[378] This also happens to be a form of weight by which the gods are unaffected. In fact, one could go as far as to say that the gods, as the models of the perfect access to the superlative, are unaffected by any kind of weight whatsoever.

from the bottom up, i.e., from the point of view of those that are at the endpoint of this succession of restrictions, they appear as a series of obstacles the ψυχή has to overcome in order to return to its original airborne, sky-dwelling condition. From the point of view of the aetiological description, however, these factors of limitation are specific modalities of the force that pulls us away from the superlative. These factors are presented in mythical terms throughout the narrative. As pointed out above, not all of the mishaps described in the myth can be easily translated into recognisable factors of limitation, on the aetiological plane. Some of them are merely components of the cosmological myth, adding variety, vibrancy and sometimes comedy to the story. Others, on the other hand, can tells us something significant about our own condition.

The way the factors of limitation are presented within the mythical narrative correlates to a certain extent to a scale of proximity to and distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This is so much so that, if we follow the different degrees of the scale, we will be able to find different factors of limitation, and vice-versa. The reason for this is easy enough to understand: the distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is determined by the difficulty in reaching it, or, which amounts to the same, by the factors that limit the superlative mobility of the wings. These also correspond to the multiplicity of variations of the human ψυχαί that correspond to what we have identified as the third layer of the stratigraphic structure of the palinode, as well as to a specification of the location of each soul in relation to the superlative combination of all positive superlatives.

The different degrees of the scale are understood in contrast with a degree that is, so to speak, outside the scale itself. This degree corresponds to the peculiar situation of the gods, e.g., the absence of limitation in the access to the superlative – the model of the perfect connection with the superlative. The human souls start already below this perfect degree, as they are constitutively limited in their connection with the superlative.

In contrast with the ease that characterizes the journey of the gods, the situation of the non-divine souls is determined by a single word: μόγις. In 247b2, it is used to describe the journey of the non-divine souls: they do it with difficulty. This is attributed, as we have seen in previous sections, not to temporary or extraneous conditions, but to the very composition of the non-divine souls. The non-divine souls are partially composed by the bad and disobedient horse, which, as Socrates puts it, weighs the soul down. To this Socrates adds a restrictive clause: the ascent is difficult for the charioteers

that have not trained the horse well (247b3)[379]. The introduction of this restrictive clause to the overall statement of the difficulty of ascent would seem to suggest that the constitutive flaw that haunts non-divine souls could be somewhat sorted out by some kind of training. This would give a chance to the non-divine souls of being able to achieve their goal entirely, even if that requires the extra effort of training the disobedient horse. In this case, the fundamental difference between divine and non-divine souls in what regards the success of their journey would be, in the end, non-existent. Both sets of souls would achieve it, provided that the non-divine souls train their bad horse well.

This, however, does not seem to be the case. Firstly, a difference in the degree of effort remains: the human charioteer has to work hard to tame the bad horse; for the divine charioteer, all the horses are obedient by their very nature. Secondly, the relative ease that can be achieved through training the bad horse does not entail a complete and unrestricted access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The non-divine souls that have best followed the gods reach the top of the sky, but only the head of the charioteer is able to enter the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Whilst the charioteer's head pops out of the sky into the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, he is disturbed from the contemplation of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα by the horses. The result of this comical situation is that even the most divine-like of the non-divine souls contemplates that which exists (τὰ ὄντα) μόγις, with difficulty (248a1-3)[380]. The soul in this situation is indeed contemplating the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. But the difficulties caused by the horses distract the charioteer from his contemplation and this suggests that the vision of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is less than perfect. The charioteer has difficulties seeing the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, which is to say that he sees it *badly*[381]. This is nonetheless the top of the scale for the non-divine souls. Even the best possible situation is already fraught with limitations.

The second step of this descending scale is still one characterized by a relatively successful journey to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The souls in this situation are still able to

[379] See also the description of the bad horse in 253d7ff.: "ὁ δ᾽ αὖ σκολιός, πολύς, εἰκῇ συμπεφορημένος, κρατεραύχην, βραχυτράχηλος, σιμοπρόσωπος, μελάγχρως, γλαυκόμματος, ὕφαιμος, ὕβρεως καὶ ἀλαζονείας ἑταῖρος, περὶ ὦτα λάσιος, κωφός, μάστιγι μετὰ κέντρων μόγις ὑπείκων."

[380] "αἱ δὲ ἄλλαι ψυχαί, ἡ μὲν ἄριστα θεῷ ἑπομένη καὶ εἰκασμένη ὑπερῆρεν εἰς τὸν ἔξω τόπον τὴν τοῦ ἡνιόχου κεφαλήν, καὶ συμπεριηνέχθη τὴν περιφοράν, θορυβουμένη ὑπὸ τῶν ἵππων καὶ μόγις καθορῶσα τὰ ὄντα". This passage is both comic and grotesque. This mixture of the comic with the grotesque is a clear sign that this is a pastiche of comic utopia. The utopic content is undermined by the grotesque details.

[381] Cf. 250b1ff.: "δικαιοσύνης μὲν οὖν καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τίμια ψυχαῖς οὐκ ἔνεστι φέγγος οὐδὲν ἐν τοῖς τῇδε ὁμοιώμασιν, ἀλλὰ δι᾽ ἀμυδρῶν ὀργάνων μόγις αὐτῶν καὶ ὀλίγοι ἐπὶ τὰς εἰκόνας ἰόντες θεῶνται τὸ τοῦ εἰκασθέντος γένος".

reach their aim, but with limited success. In this second category of souls are included some of those that were not able to train the bad horse appropriately, thereby achieving only an intermittent access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This is another element of comedy added to an already comic situation: the charioteer's head pops out into the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but, because he is not able to control his horses appropriately, he is pulled down by them, just to resurface again[382]. In this situation, the view that he has had of what Socrates calls "τὰ ὄντα" is truncated and far from clear: some are seen, but others are not. The intermittency of this contemplation makes any knowledge that the soul might have acquired partial and incomplete.

These two stages, however, are still considered successful. The souls somehow reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, albeit in a limited way. But, as we have seen before, the possibility of failure can never be completely ruled out. At every cycle, the soul might not reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος – and consequently fail in having even a glimpse of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα in that journey.

The first two degrees of the scale correspond to situations where the soul has some success in reaching the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. From the third degree onwards what we will find is a succession of failures, disasters and catastrophes, each one contributing to the retention of the once superlatively mobile soul in the inferior region that is earth.

In the myth, the situation of souls that are unable to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is described in very emphatic terms. The souls that struggle to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος clash against one another, trample one another and compete to fulfil their aim[383]. The order that we find at the beginning of the myth is now replaced by chaos and confusion. What is described is the complete breakdown of the ordered system that had been so loftily proclaimed in 246e4ff. Zeus, the μέγας ἡγεμὼν ἐν οὐρανῷ, and the other

[382] 248a4: "ἡ δὲ τοτὲ μὲν ἦρεν, τοτὲ δ' ἔδυ, βιαζομένων δὲ τῶν ἵππων τὰ μὲν εἶδεν, τὰ δ' οὔ." The image used in this passage is very suggestive: one can immediately imagine heads popping up and going down, as an underwater swimmer coming to the surface to then go down again. Cf. *Phaedo* 108e1ff. The parallel is irresistible: the difference between the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and the inferior regions is similar to the difference between the region we normally inhabit and the world under the sea. See p. 391 ff., note 309, above.

[383] 248a5ff.: "αἱ δὲ δὴ ἄλλαι γλιχόμεναι μὲν ἅπασαι τοῦ ἄνω ἔπονται, ἀδυνατοῦσαι δέ, ὑποβρύχιαι συμπεριφέρονται, πατοῦσαι ἀλλήλας καὶ ἐπιβάλλουσαι, ἑτέρα πρὸ τῆς ἑτέρας πειρωμένη γενέσθαι. θόρυβος οὖν καὶ ἅμιλλα καὶ ἱδρὼς ἔσχατος γίγνεται, οὗ δὴ κακίᾳ ἡνιόχων πολλαὶ μὲν χωλεύονται, πολλαὶ δὲ πολλὰ πτερὰ θραύονται"

gods comfortably in the πεδίον τῆς ἀληθείας, the well-organized formation of the souls that followed them reverts to conflict and chaos.

This reversion to the opposite of the ordered formation of the beginning of the palinode is correlated to the characteristic that sets the non-divine souls in this situation apart from the ones that are at least relatively successful in their endeavour. As we have stated before, all non-divine souls have to deal with an unruly element, represented in the palinode by the disobedient horse. We have also mentioned the fact that taming the bad horse is presented in the palinode as the remedy for this constitutive handicap. But some of the souls seem to be unable to tame the bad horse and rise up to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This is attributed to the κακία of the charioteers, i.e., their incompetence at driving the chariot[384].

Unable to ascend and to control the chariot, but still eager to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, these souls clash against one another. Now, in addition to all the difficulties that plague the ascent of the non-divine souls, these specific souls have to overcome another obstacle: all the other souls that are struggling to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This adds another layer of difficulty to the already difficult journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The clash is the cause of serious harm to the souls: many are seriously injured, become lame; some even break their wings (248d3).

With the wings maimed, the balance of forces between the wings and the weight is completely changed. The weight becomes the predominant force acting upon the soul. The souls are no longer able to remain airborne and fall. The loss of the wings, however, does not seem to have a single cause. It is rather the result of a set of different causes or conditions. The first seems to be the clash itself, which physically (at least in the economy of the myth) breaks the wings. But the weight itself is in a way presented as a cause of the loss of the wings, i.e., the loss of the ability to stay airborne. However, the single most

[384] 248c4ff.: "ὅταν δὲ ἀδυνατήσασα ἐπισπέσθαι μὴ ἴδῃ, καί τινι συντυχίᾳ χρησαμένη λήθης τε καὶ κακίας πλησθεῖσα βαρυνθῇ, βαρυνθεῖσα δὲ πτερορρυήσῃ τε καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν πέσῃ". Critics and translators are divided on how to interpret the meaning of the word κακία in this context: some seem to attribute to it some kind of moral connotation (see RITTER, 61; HACKFORTH, *ad locum*; ROBIN, *ad locum*; SCULLY, *ad locum*; MOUZE, *ad locum*), whereas others understand it as incompetence or lack of skill (see VERDENIUS, *ad locum*; DE VRIES, *ad locum*; HEITSCH, *ad locum*; ROWE, *ad locum*). YUNIS, *ad locum*, is Solomonic in his approach, reminding us of both connotations and choosing both. Cf. 248b2ff.: "θόρυβος οὖν καὶ ἅμιλλα καὶ ἱδρὼς ἔσχατος γίγνεται, οὗ δὴ κακίᾳ ἡνιόχων πολλαὶ μὲν χωλεύονται, πολλαὶ δὲ πολλὰ πτερὰ θραύονται". It is possible, though, that κακία might suggest, besides lack of skill in driving the chariot, a significant degree of distance from what is, after all, the superlative combination of all positive superlatives, i.e. everything that is good in its purest form.

important condition is the fact that having at least a glimpse of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is a *condicio sine qua non* of remaining in the sky; without it, the soul necessarily loses its wings and falls into the earth. The contemplation of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα is said to be the nourishment of the wings. Without this nourishment, they wither away and lose their ability to counteract the weight[385]. This results in a catastrophic change in the situation of the soul.

Our point of view is now transported from the heights of the sky and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος to the bottom level, earth. This transition can most accurately be regarded as a displacement. The wings of the soul, which, as we have seen, are a fundamental part of it and what provides its ability to stay airborne, were severed. The soul has fallen down from the sky into earth, with apparently no possibility of returning to its original place. Previously, we saw the soul in all its glory: a chariot powerfully flying through the sky, yearning for the place that is above all else in the cosmos. Now, we see the soul in a much degraded form, maimed, disfigured, trapped in exile[386]. It has lost the ability to fly.

This is a severe loss. As it was described in the beginning of the palinode, the soul is characterized by almost unlimited mobility. Now that its wings are lost, not only is the soul forced to inhabit the lowest region, it can no longer move upwards. Now that there is no force opposing the downward tendency of weight and that it has hit what it appears

[385] 248c5ff.: "ὅταν δὲ ἀδυνατήσασα ἐπισπέσθαι μὴ ἴδῃ, καί τινι συντυχίᾳ χρησαμένη λήθης τε καὶ κακίας πλησθεῖσα βαρυνθῇ, βαρυνθεῖσα δὲ πτεροῤῥυήσῃ τε καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν πέσῃ"

[386] The maiming and disfiguration of the ψυχή is intimately connected with its condition as an exile. Not only is the exile the result of the maiming, but it is also because it is maimed that the soul cannot escape from its place of exile. But there is yet another way in which these two aspects are connected, one that can be illustrated by two parallels in other parts of the *corpus Platonicum*. In *Republic* X, 611c9ff. we are introduced to the sea god Glaucus, whose original nature has been completely changed by his immersion in the sea. He is broken, maimed, covered in all sorts of shells, rocks and seaweeds. But this dramatic change in the appearance of Glaucus corresponds to an adaptation to his new environment. The sea changes him in such a way that he now belongs to the sea. And yet, beneath all those changes, the same original nature remains, perhaps susceptible of being recovered somehow. Glaucus has become of the sea, and yet he is not of the sea. The other parallel is to be found in the *Symposium*, in Aristophanes' speech. Human beings also had an original nature as orbicular beings that was radically changed throughout several operations of cutting, maiming, disfiguring and corresponding attempts of healing and patching up the wounds. Compared with what they once were, human beings are now smaller, weaker, a fragment of their former selves. More than that: λήθη has interfered and the current members of mankind know nothing about their original nature. And yet the yearning for completeness remains. And it is this yearning that reveals that these fragments of mankind are actually fragments of a once greater whole. In short, it reveals the disproportion between their *de facto* condition and their original nature. The fallen ψυχαί of the *Phaedrus* are in a similar ambiguous situation. Through maiming and λήθη, they have forgotten about their previous airborne condition, about their once closer connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The place of exile therefore becomes like a home for them. And yet, the ψυχαί do not actually belong in exile, but in the sky, flying towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. And this sense of displacement somehow survives.

to be rock bottom, the soul's whole mobility must rely only on the traction provided by the horses. In a way, the soul is contracted and becomes smaller. This contraction is not only represented by the loss of a fundamental part of it, the wings, but also by the reduction of the range of what is possible for it. The world of the fallen soul is smaller and more limited than the world of the soul in its glorious airborne state.

As was the case in its pre-fallen state, the single most important factor in the life of the soul is the distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Now, however, the distance is much greater. In its airborne state, the distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος could be great and the journey towards it far from easy; it was, nevertheless, an apparently attainable goal. The life of the airborne soul was one of movement towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The life of the soul that is stranded on earth is deprived of that movement altogether. There is apparently no way of negotiating the huge distance that stands between the fallen soul and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. There is a chasm between the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and the fallen soul, a chasm as big as the whole sky.

This alters the criteria for the composition of the rest of the scale. Before the fall and loss of wings, the scale was composed using as its main criterion the difficulties faced in reaching the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. If there is no longer any journey – at least not in the terms that we have been dealing with so far – it would seem likely that that would be the bottom step of the scale. The scale would then go like this: (relative) success in reaching the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος; limited and partial success; complete failure. In this interpretation all fallen souls would be in the same state: far away from the *terminus ad quem* of their existence, deprived of the contemplation of τὰ ὄντα, immersed in λήθη.

However, even if the fallen souls can be seen as being equal in their failure, the scale still introduces further distinctions between them. But the criterion now used is not how successful they *are* in contemplating τὰ ὄντα, but how successful they *were* at some point in doing it. This is obviously much more than a subtle difference between past and present – which is almost meaningless in a text that is tuned in with a sense of eternity. The importance of this resides in what it actually means to contemplate τὰ ὄντα or to fail to do so.

The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is also called πεδίον τῆς ἀληθείας. These poetical and mythical terms are important for our understanding of what is at stake here. Ὑπερουράνιος τόπος indicates the relative position of the place, above the sky and a

fortiori the earth, with all the symbolic importance that derives from that fact. Πεδίον τῆς ἀληθείας refers to the fact that that most excellent place is the seat of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα, of τὰ ὄντα, in other words, of those beings the contemplation and knowledge of which constitute truth or ἀλήθεια. In this sense, the success in reaching the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and contemplating τὰ ὄντα constitutes a high degree of ἀλήθεια. The scale of success can therefore be understood as a scale of degrees of ἀλήθεια, considered against the background of the mythical scenario set up by Socrates. By following the scale down to its lower degrees, one is following a path from the most ἀλήθεια possible to a human soul to the condition where the soul is most affected by λήθη, with a myriad of different intermediary stages in between.

But before we carry on with our journey down this path of increasing λήθη, we must detain ourselves for a while to consider a further important mythical element of the text. In 248c3, Socrates introduces the figure of the "θεσμὸς Ἀδραστείας" (248c3)[387]. As the goddess of necessity, ἀνάγκη, Ἀδραστεία legislates and regulates the situation of the souls. This is done through a θεσμός, a law, edict or decree. The word θεσμός is used rather than the more common word νόμος. Socrates deliberately chooses the more archaic and solemn word to provide solemnity to what is about to be proclaimed, which is quite becoming the lofty tone of the palinode overall. Plus, the word θεσμός was associated with the more ancient, more venerable, and stricter rules that were established by a higher authority, in contrast with νόμος, which in Plato's time was the common word to designate the laws approved by the πόλις and that which is considered to be normal behaviour. Furthermore, the word θεσμός was associated among the Athenians with the ancient laws of Draco, proverbially known for their ruthless severity[388]. Therefore, an

[387] The mythical figure of Ἀδραστεία seems to be a personification of ἀνάγκη. RITTER, 127 n63: "hier offenbar die Weltordnung personifiziert, ähnlich wie im Mythos des Staats, X 616C, die Ananke." See also HEITSCH, 103: "Der etymologisch durchsichtige Name bezeichnet die Göttin der Notwendigkeit, "der man nicht entkommt". It is mentioned in several Orphic fragments (Kern 54, 105, 152, 162), making this yet another Orphic element in the description of the fall of the soul. See WEST, M, *The Orphic Poems*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1983, 194-196. Adrasteia can also identified with Nemesis, cf. PSEUDO-EURIPIDES, *Rhesus*, 342; ANTIMACHUS COLOPHONIUS, frag. 53 (Wyss). Adrasteia is mentioned only one more time in the *corpus Platonicum*, in *Republic* 451a4: "προσκυνῶ δὲ Ἀδράστειαν". See ADAM, ad locum. This phrase is an obvious echo of AESCHYLUS, *Prometheus Vinctus*, 936: "οἱ προσκυνοῦντες τὴν Ἀδράστειαν σοφοί." All in all, Adrasteia is the personification of unyielding and unresistable necessity – before whom one must bow. HACKFORTH (82) sees in the phrase "θεσμὸς Ἀδραστείας" an echo of Empedocles' "ἀνάγκης χρῆμα" (DK 115). See THOMPSON, ad locum: "(…) is simply 'the law of destiny'". Cf. RITTER, 127 n63: "θεσμὸς Ἀδραστείας ist ziemlich genau unser "Naturgesetz"." See also STALLBAUM, *ad locum*; DE VRIES, *ad locum*; SALA, 168f., 173f.; YUNIS, *ad locum*.

[388] See OSTWALD, M., *From Popular Sovereignty to the Sovereignty of Laws:* Law, Society, and Politics in Fifth-Century Athens, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1986; RUDEBUSCH,

expression like "θεσμὸς Ἀδραστείας" combines the inflexibility of the Ἀδραστεία figure, which is equivalent with the inflexibility of necessity, with the severity, authoritativeness and impositive character of the draconian code of laws. This is not a human law, a reflexion of a socially shared perspective, established to enforce a specific socially accepted behaviour; it is rather a divine law, imposed by a distant, inflexible and all-powerful entity, set high above any human being. As we shall see, this law constitutes and regulates the basic framework for the life of the fallen souls – and yet, this is a law that is imposed on them, not through coercion or the threat of punishment, but simply through the irresistible power of necessity. The decree of Adrasteia sets how things must be, because it sets how things are – there is no alternative.

This θεσμός is very complex and regulates virtually the whole existence of the non-divine souls (248c3ff.). It sets up the conditions and requirements for them to stay amongst the gods in the sky. It also regulates the life of the souls in their fallen state: it not only sets up the whole scale of modes of living, the succession of different lives of a soul, but also the requirements and conditions for the possible recovery of the wings. The first of these events has already been covered by the palinode in its description of the life of the non-divine souls before the fall. But until this point we have dealt with precisely that: a description. The θεσμὸς Ἀδραστείας, however, introduces a prescriptive element to the mythological account. Things are as they are because the law of necessity so decrees. The non-divine souls exist in a cycle of journeys to and from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος in the train of the gods, in a constant struggle to contemplate τὰ ὄντα, because it is so ordered and decreed by necessity.

It is necessary for the non-divine souls to actually have at least a glimpse of τὰ ὄντα in order to remain airborne – it is a condition *sine qua non* of human nature[389].

G., Plato on Knowing a Tradition, *Philosophy East and West* 38 (1988), 324-333, especially 326; F. GSCHNITZER, Zur Terminologie von 'Gesetz' und 'Recht' im frühen Griechisch, in: G. THOR, J. VÉLISSAROPOULOS-KARAKOSTAS (ed.), *Symposion 1995*: Vorträge zur griechischen und hellenistischen Rechtsgeschichte (Korfu, 1.-5. September 1995), Köln, Wien, Böhlau, 1997, 3-10; K.-J. HÖLKESKAMP, (In-)Schrift und Monument. Zum Begriff des Gesetzes im archaischen und klassischen Griechenland, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 132 (2000), 73-96; IDEM, Nomos, Thesmos und Verwandtes. Vergleichende Uberlegungen zur Konzeptualisierung geschriebenen Rechts im klassischen Griechenland, in: D. COHEN (Ed.), *Demokratie, Recht und soziale Kontrolle im klassischen Athen*, München 2002, 115-46; A. FOUCHARD, Légiferer en Grèce ancienne, in: SINEUX, P. (ed.), *Le législateur et la loi dans l'Antiquité* : hommage à Françoise Ruzé : actes du colloque de Caen, 15-17 mai 2003, Caen, Presses Universitaires de Caen, 2005, 13-26. Sometimes, the contrast between νόμος and θέσμος is used to contrast the laws of Solon and the laws of Draco: e.g., ANDOCIDES, Περὶ τῶν μυστηρίων, 81: "τέως δὲ χρῆσθαι τοῖς Σόλωνος νόμοις καὶ τοῖς Δράκοντος θεσμοῖς."

[389] 248c3ff.: "ἥτις ἂν ψυχὴ θεῷ συνοπαδὸς γενομένη κατίδῃ τι τῶν ἀληθῶν, μέχρι τε τῆς ἑτέρας περιόδου

Before the introduction of the law of necessity, this could be read as an almost "biological" imperative, since it is explained in the palinode in terms of nourishment. But now we see that some kind of cosmic rule is at stake here. This cosmic rule, though apparently unnecessary to explain how the life of the non-divine souls works in their pre-fallen state, has to be introduced at this stage in order to explain their new condition as exiles. As well as setting the contemplation of τὰ ὄντα as a requirement for staying airborne, the θεσμὸς Ἀδραστείας regulates the destiny of the souls that fail to do so.

The lack of continuity between these two states, emphasized by the event of the fall, also represents a radical cut in terms of the "mechanics" of the lives of the souls. If the direct contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is now severed, making the journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος apparently impossible, there is a need for something else to work as the fundamental rule of their movement. The θεσμὸς Ἀδραστείας does precisely that. Ironically, it does it by re-establishing the journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, albeit in a very different way. What was before just a flight towards it, now becomes a succession of lives and reincarnations – but with the ultimate aim of returning to the original winged condition. Its severity and strictness notwithstanding, the θεσμός provides a way out of the place of exile, another chance of recovering the wings and returning to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

But we need to look into this in more detail. The θεσμὸς Ἀδραστείας starts by setting up the conditions for a life free from βλάβη: to catch a glimpse of τι τῶν ἀληθῶν (248c4). It should be noted that the requirement, at least at first, seems quite modest. The decree of necessity does not demand a full vision of τὰ ἀληθῆ; it just asks for a glimpse of something out of the ἀληθῆ. Ultimately, one could spend eternity in cyclical journeys to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος catching just little glimpses of tiny fragments of ἀλήθεια without ever crashing down to earth. The intensity and the quality of the contact with τὰ ὄντα is variable from soul to soul and from journey to journey, which is the same as saying that the degrees of ἀλήθεια present in each soul may vary.

On the other hand, the apparent modesty of the requirement only stresses the sense of failure that resulted in our current *de facto* condition. The fallen souls were unable to catch at least a tiny little glimpse of the tiniest little portion of τὰ ὄντα in their last journey

εἶναι ἀπήμονα, κἂν ἀεὶ τοῦτο δύνηται ποιεῖν, ἀεὶ ἀβλαβῆ εἶναι· ὅταν δὲ ἀδυνατήσασα ἐπισπέσθαι μὴ ἴδῃ, καί τινι συντυχίᾳ χρησαμένη λήθης τε καὶ κακίας πλησθεῖσα βαρυνθῇ, βαρυνθεῖσα δὲ πτεροῤῥυήσῃ τε καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν πέσῃ"

and it is for that reason that they are in their current predicament. But this failure does not erase the result of an indeterminate number of relatively successful journeys to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The vision of τὰ ὄντα needs to be constantly renovated, but this does not mean that each new vision erases the result of the previous one, nor does it mean that failure destroys all the cognitive patrimony that has been acquired. The fall radically changes the situation of the soul and represents an increment in the degree of λήθη, but the fallen souls still experience different degrees of λήθη.

The decree of necessity also regulates what happens after the fall and introduces an important clause restricting how low a soul can fall. The θεσμός solemnly decrees that a soul that has been unable to see τὰ ὄντα will not be incarnated at first into the body of an animal, but of a human being. It then provides us with a scale of different βίοι, ways of life, from best to worse (248d2ff.). The criterion used to order the different βίοι is explicitly stated to be how much of τὰ ὄντα the soul has been able to see before the fall. The type of life one has after the fall is determined by the distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, not unlike what happened before the fall. But now the distance is measured in degrees of λήθη, not in the difficulty to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Unable to renovate their cognitive patrimony with new visions of τὰ ὄντα, the fallen souls must now rely on what has been already acquired. They have apparently lost their cognitive livelihood and most now live out of their savings. The more one has invested, the more one has at one's disposal when things go bad.

The scale of βίοι seems to be the continuation of the previous scale of distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but under different conditions. In both situations, however, what is measured is the degree of λήθη in each soul. From the philosopher and the lover (both βίοι which will be later dealt with in detail) to the proverbial figure of the tyrant[390],

[390] In a scale that "measures" the degree of distance from the superlative combination of all positive superlatives, one would perhaps expect that the figure of the tyrant would rank higher. In fact, the tyrant has superlative power among men, superlative wealth, and the ability to satisfy his every whim and desire, which amounts not only to freedom from want, but also to an overflowing of goods, a true cornucopia of delights. In a way, the tyrant seems to live the closest a mortal life could be to a godlike life. This, at least, is how he is seen by Polus in the *Gorgias* (466c1ff., especially 471a4ff.), and such a view would not be, at first sight, entirely incompatible with our interpretation of the aetiological meaning of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. That, however, would be to forget that the tyrant has had a very partial and distorted view of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. So much so that the behaviour of the tyrant can be explained, in the economy of the myth, by the coincidence between this partial and distorted view of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and the peculiar desires attributed to the bad horse. This partial and distorted view leads to the charioteer's identification of the superlative being confused with the particular *termini ad quos* of the bad horse. These are now seen as the superlative. It is perhaps this peculiar mixture of λήθη, distortion and adherence to the orientation of the bad horse, all in the guise of following the superlative, that puts the tyrant so low in the

going through figures like the politician, the doctor or the poet, the scale of lives seems to reflect different ways of relating to ἀλήθεια. But these different βίοι are more than just labels that reflect the different degrees of λήθη as a result of their airborne past. They reflect different ways of living, different ways of actually applying and relating to the knowledge that has been acquired in their original airborne condition. It is possible that these different βίοι may actually be the result of the different angles from which the superlatives that populate the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος were accessed by the different souls. In other words, one becomes a poet or a seer or a politician due to what superlatives were actually seen in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, in the partial and intermittent access the souls once had of it. They therefore might represent different ways in which one's point of view can be centred in relation to the superlative combination of positive superlatives: either on this or in that superlative, under this or that degree of λήθη[391].

The philosopher is not only less affected by λήθη, but he also has a different relationship with τὰ ὄντα. In the other end of the scale, the tyrant is not only superlatively affected by λήθη, but the way he lives is the result of this high degree of λήθη. Even more than that: the way the philosopher, the tyrant and any other of these characters live will affect what happens to them next. And this is so because the scale is dynamic in nature, not static. One can go up and down the scale – more easily down, as we have witnessed. The scale states the possibility of reincarnation and this means that a soul is not limited to a single βίος, but will be able to live through several of them. This provides the chance for going up the scale and even, in certain circumstances that we will analyse in detail in future sections, for recovering the wings and returning to the sky, but it also can result in falling even further down the scale, becoming more and more immerse in λήθη, to the point where the soul is no longer human (249b4).

Taking the myth at face value, it seems that the progression or regression of the soul in this scale does not depend entirely of the degree of λήθη it was in when the fall happened. It depends on what each soul does in its successive lives to get closer or further away from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. In a way, the struggle to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος does not cease once the soul falls and loses the ability to fly. It keeps going, but now acquires a different dimension. For a fallen soul, each life is like a flight towards the

scale of lives.

[391] See TELO, H., Recalling the Godly Rhythm of Yore, in CARVALHO, M. J., CAEIRO, A., TELO, H. (ed.), *In the Mirror of the Phaedrus*, Sankt Augustin, Academia Verlag, 2013, 111-166, 130ff.

ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but without wings; the ones that get closer to it will have the chance to move up a little in the ladder; the ones who fail will, like with the great fall, go down the scale.

This puts the tension between ἀλήθεια and λήθη at the heart of human existence. Λήθη appears as yet another element of limitation of the connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, an element that plays a crucial role in defining and determining our *de facto* condition. But ἀλήθεια never ceases to play a fundamental role as well. That this is true regarding the souls before the fall is clear enough from what we have seen so far. Part of the hunger for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is for the ontological and cognitive ideals that number among the superlatives; also, all the superlatives are hungered for inasmuch as they superlatively real. And so the airborne souls, in their journey towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, are also in pursuit of ἀλήθεια. The interference of λήθη never leads to an elimination of ἀλήθεια. Rather, human beings are also somehow in connection with ἀλήθεια.

The way in which this translates to the condition of the fallen ψυχαί, however, is more complicated. In order to understand this, we must briefly consider how the highest ranking of the scale of βίοι is determined by ἀλήθεια. The philosopher is the one who lives in pursuit of what has been lost, the vision of τὰ ὄντα. Aware of the limitations of his current *de facto* point of view, he is also aware of the possibility of overcoming those limitations. He strives, therefore, to rekindle the relationship with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as much as he can through ἀνάμνησις. He is set on the path towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος – even if he himself is not aware that that place exists. He is still affected by λήθη, but in such a way that he is mobilised to overcome it. We will have the opportunity to look into this with more detail later on, when we concentrate on the fundamental notion of ἀνάμνησις at stake in the palinode. What is most important now is to note the fact that the fall does not necessary imply a complete cut with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and that the relationship with it can, in certain circumstances, be quite intense. This is the case of the philosopher, who, albeit without wings, tries to return to it and contemplate, as much as a possible in its wretched mutilated state, τὰ ὄντα.

The possibility of a βίος φιλόσοφος shows us that the fall might not obliterate the yearning that characterized the relationship of the souls in their original condition with τὰ ὄντα. But, if this is true of the philosopher, can it also be true of the multiplicity of other

βίοι, even of the tyrant? In other words, is the yearning for ἀλήθεια a constitutive element of the soul even in its fallen state or is it just a circumstantial remnant of the original condition of the soul, preserved in the special case of the philosopher?

As far as we are able to ascertain, a permanent, all powerful yearning for ἀλήθεια is something we do not experience, except, perhaps, in sporadic and brief occasions. To say that we live our lives in the restless pursuit of ἀλήθεια would not correspond to our normal experience. Most people most of the time seem to be worried with a myriad of things other than ἀλήθεια and the contemplation of τὰ ὄντα. If this is the case, describing the human soul as being determined by a constitutive yearning for ἀλήθεια would seem far from accurate.

But there might be another way of understanding this matter. One of the most important characteristics of the philosopher, that which sets the βίος φιλόσοφος apart from almost all the other βίοι, is that the philosopher is aware of the fact that his soul is full of λήθη. This means that the relationship that he has with the λήθη that affects his soul is one that could almost oxymoronically be described as one of ἀλήθεια. This ἀλήθεια regarding λήθη that characterizes the point of view of the philosopher is not an attribute of the other βίοι. The other βίοι, from the least to the most affected by λήθη, do not seem to possess the same kind of awareness of λήθη itself that characterizes the point of view of the philosopher. In a way, one could describe these points of view as being affected by a second kind of λήθη, a compound λήθη, a λήθη regarding λήθη itself. In addition to the different degrees of λήθη regarding τὰ ὄντα that characterize the different βίοι, there is this second λήθη regarding λήθη[392].

[392] Cf. *Sophist*, 228c1ff.: ΞΕ. Τί δ'; ὅσ' <ἂν> κινήσεως μετασχόντα καὶ σκοπόν τινα θέμενα πειρώμενα τούτου τυγχάνειν καθ' ἑκάστην ὁρμὴν παράφορα αὐτοῦ γίγνηται καὶ ἀποτυγχάνῃ, πότερον αὐτὰ φήσομεν ὑπὸ συμμετρίας τῆς πρὸς ἄλληλα ἢ τοὐναντίον ὑπὸ ἀμετρίας αὐτὰ πάσχειν; ΘΕΑΙ. Δῆλον ὡς ὑπὸ ἀμετρίας. ΞΕ. Ἀλλὰ μὴν ψυχήν γε ἴσμεν ἄκουσαν πᾶσαν πᾶν ἀγνοοῦσαν. ΘΕΑΙ. Σφόδρα γε. ΞΕ. Τό γε μὴν ἀγνοεῖν ἐστιν ἐπ' ἀλήθειαν ὁρμωμένης ψυχῆς, παραφόρου συνέσεως γιγνομένης, οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν παραφροσύνη.". See also IDEM, 229c1ff.: "ΞΕ. Ἀγνοίας γοῦν μέγα τί μοι δοκῶ καὶ χαλεπὸν ἀφωρισμένον ὁρᾶν εἶδος, πᾶσι τοῖς ἄλλοις αὐτῆς ἀντίσταθμον μέρεσιν. ΘΕΑΙ. Ποῖον δή; ΞΕ. Τὸ μὴ κατειδότα τι δοκεῖν εἰδέναι· δι' οὗ κινδυνεύει πάντα ὅσα διανοίᾳ σφαλλόμεθα γίγνεσθαι πᾶσιν. ΘΕΑΙ. Ἀληθῆ. ΞΕ. Καὶ δὴ καὶ τούτῳ γε οἶμαι μόνῳ τῆς ἀγνοίας ἀμαθίαν τοὔνομα προσρηθῆναι.". The type of "ignorance" at stake in this passage goes beyond "missing the mark". It is a missing the mark regarding missing the mark; a being wrong about not being wrong. It requires a double error: the original error regarding a certain state of affairs, and a second error regarding the validity of original judgement. This second error produces what the Eleatic Stranger calls ἀμαθία, "stupidity", an ignorance regarding one's ignorance. But there is more to this than just a matter of error. More importantly, this also applies to matters of intelligibility or the lack thereof. We have contact with and make use of the determination X; but we also believe that we understand what the determination X is all about. It is not just the case of making use of a determination one does not in fact understand, but something rather more serious: we do not know that we do not understand. As such, we carry on dealing

The absence of any apparent notification of an alternative to the obscured state of λήθη that dominates these βίοι results in a severe reduction of the yearning for ἀλήθεια. But it is in fact a reduction, not an elimination. The compound λήθη obscures the fact that our relationship with τὰ ὄντα is dominated by λήθη, but, consequently, at the same time, turns what should be an awareness of the absence of ἀλήθεια, in variable degrees, into the illusion of its presence. The λήθη regarding λήθη results in a silent but effective conviction that our point of view is fundamentally characterized by ἀλήθεια. And the presence of this strange form of λήθη – a λήθη that masks itself as ἀλήθεια by hiding its nature as λήθη – serves as a substitute of ἀλήθεια and is enough to sate our intrinsic hunger for it. In short, every soul needs and wants ἀλήθεια and the only reason most of them do not actively pursue it is because they are convinced they already have it. The need for truth remains, but is deceived into a somewhat dormant state by a λήθη that is erroneously understood as ἀλήθεια. And this is the paradox at the very heart of the condition of the fallen souls: that which they need the most is put even further away from their reach by the fact that they wrongly believe that they already possess it.

What we have seen so far allows us once again add to the formula of human nature. We have observed that human beings are those beings in which an intrinsically hindered connection with the superlative concentration of all positive superlatives happens within the framework of a system of forces characterised by complex traction and the possibility of a multiplicity of different directions and outcomes. We observed as well that each human soul is defined by its location in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, according the degree of development of its wings – a location that is a variation of the original connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Now we can add another more specific determination to this formula: the location of each human soul in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is further determined by the balance between ἀλήθεια and λήθη, with the irremovable presence of a *quantum minimum* of ἀλήθεια, even in those cases in which λήθη is so overwhelming that it becomes a compound λήθη, i.e., a λήθη that hides itself and assumes the mask of ἀλήθεια.

5.4. Σῶμα as an element of retention of the human point of view

with the determination as if it were perfectly clear. The lack of intelligibility is masked and actually appears under the guise of its opposite.

For the non-divine souls, the contrast between their original winged condition and their fallen condition could not be greater. The almost absolute freedom of movement that characterizes their original condition is now replaced by its opposite: an overlaying of elements of retention. Σῶμα acts as such an element in the economy of the palinode.

The σῶμα, however, is different from the other elements of retention we have seen so far. It seems to be something exterior, exogenous, added to the overall set of restrictions that constitutively limit the soul's ability to act. The encounter between ψυχή and σῶμα is the result of the crash. It is the consequence of a terrible accident that left the soul mutilated. This idea is introduced even before the detailed description of the fall of the soul. In 246c1, Socrates tells us of what happens to the soul who has lost its wings: it falls down until it finds something solid to hold to[393]. This something solid is the body. It is described almost as the incidental receptacle of something that happens to fall down from the sky.

It is, as usual in this text, a comic description, almost cartoonish. The soul loses its wings, falls down abruptly from the sky, until a body stops its fall. The body, which had up until that point been completely empty and inert, is now animated by the presence of the soul. The soul now inhabits the body. The soul lives inside the body and exercises its power over it. This fact alone shows us that there is a substantial contraction over the scope of the soul's ἐπιμέλεια. Before the fall, it could cover the totality of the ἄψυχα. Now, it is limited to a single previously ἄψυχον being: that particular σῶμα. This contraction could not be greater: from the whole cosmos to a single, small, almost insignificant body. Like Napoleon in Elba, the soul now only has power over a tiny fraction of what was once a powerful empire. The realm of the ψυχή is now limited to that σῶμα and whatever it can access from within that σῶμα.

This contraction of the scope of ἐπιμέλεια is associated with a reduced mobility. Not only is the soul bereft of its wings, but it also has as its only means of transportation the body itself, which it moves from within (245e4ff.). It can only move as far as the natural limits of the body allow it. In its bodily vessel the soul does not find a home or a shelter. The terms Socrates uses to describe what the body is to the soul mean the exact opposite. In 250b6ff., Socrates compares both conditions, the winged and the fallen. The

[393] "ἡ δὲ πτεροῤῥυήσασα φέρεται ἕως ἂν στερεοῦ τινος ἀντιλάβηται, οὗ κατοικισθεῖσα, σῶμα γήϊνον λαβοῦσα"

long and beautiful praise of the winged condition is followed by a short and harsh indictment of the fallen condition (250c4ff.)[394]. Before the fall, the souls were pure (καθαροί ὄντες) and ἀσήμαντοι - not entombed. The σῶμα is described as a tomb for the soul. It is further described as something the soul has to carry around – περιφέροντες – as it constitutes a burden. Socrates finishes by comparing the relationship of the soul with the body to the situation of an oyster, inasmuch as we are imprisoned in it, as an oyster is in its shell[395]. The idea is recurring and emphatic: the soul is in a tomb, the soul is imprisoned, the soul is burdened by the body.

This makes it clear that the σῶμα adds another layer of difficulty to the already difficult situation of the fallen ψυχή. It restrains the soul in almost every respect. It not only keeps the soul down, enclosed inside it, but also limits the ability of the soul to experience anything besides what is accessible down here on earth. The world of the winged soul is much vaster than the world of the embodied soul: the latter is only as big as the space the body can cross; the former is as vast as the whole world. From its vantage point, the winged soul can observe the entire universe; the fact that it has wings allows it to access the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The fallen soul, enclosed in a body, does not possess those advantages. Like an oyster inside its shell, the embodied soul can barely move (if we compare its present mobility to the one it enjoyed when winged), which adds another obstacle between it and the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and its point of view is restricted to whatever might arise from the limited set of beings it has contact with.

Σῶμα can therefore be understood as an element of restriction, retention and contraction of the scope and range of the soul. One of the effects of σῶμα is an increment on the degree of λήθη. The way this is achieved through σῶμα, however, is different from

[394] "καθαροὶ ὄντες καὶ ἀσήμαντοι τούτου ὃ νῦν δὴ σῶμα περιφέροντες ὀνομάζομεν, ὀστρέου τρόπον δεδεσμευμένοι."

[395] See, e.g, *Gorgias* 493a2-3; *Phaedo* 62c1ff., 82d1ff., 82e5ff.; *Cratylus* 400c. See SALA, *ad locum*; YUNIS, *ad locum*; DODDS, E. R. (ed.), *Plato Gorgias*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1959, *ad locum*; BURNET, *ad* 82d3; ARCHER-HIND, *ad* 82d1; ROWE, C. (ed.), *Plato Phaedo*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, *ad* 62b3-5, *ad* 82d1, *ad* 82e5; VERDENIUS, W. J., Notes on Plato's Phaedo, *Mnemosyne* 11 (1958), 193-243, *ad* 83b2; LORIAUX, R. (ed.), *Le Phédon de Platon*, Namur, Secrétariat des publications, Facultés universitaires, 1969, *ad* 62b. Cf. PHILOLAUS, B 14 DK; EMPEDOCLES, B 115 DK. See also: DODDS, E. R., *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1951, 148ff.; MOULINIER, L., *Orphée et l'orphisme*, Paris, Les Belles Letters, 1955, 24ff.; COURCELLE, P., Le corps-tombeau. Platon, *Gorgias* 493a, *Cratyle* 400c, *Phèdre* 250c, *Revue des Etudes Anciennes* 68 (1966), 101-122; VOGEL C. J. de, The sōma-sēma formula. Its function in Plato and Plotinus compared to Christian writers, in BLUMENTHAL H. J., MARKUS R. A., *Neoplatonism and Early Christian Thought. Essays in honour of A. H. Armstrong*, London, Variorum, 1981, 233-248; FERWENDER, R., The meaning of the word σῶμα in Plato's *Cratylus* 400C, *Hermes* 93 (1985), 266-279.

the other elements of retention we have seen so far. Σῶμα seems to be a wholly negative element in this equation: it does not add anything, it just subtracts. It limits the natural abilities of the soul, not by pulling it in a different direction, but by simply pinning it down. It is like the weights that keep down an already deflated balloon, or, to use an image more in tune with the palinode, the chain that binds a bird whose wings are already clipped[396].

But the effects of σῶμα are even greater than what we have so far described. Σῶμα represents the last stage in the fall of the soul, and, as such it constitutes the polar opposite of the absolute above that is the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. It is the point where the free fall stabilizes. The resulting limitation of mobility and ἐπιμέλεια in this restricted environment does not only represent a substantial contraction of the scope of the ψυχή. It also represents an acceptance of that same restriction. The ψυχή comes to accept its own limitation, and starts to *inhabit* the body. It remains a prisoner there, but a prisoner that no longer recognises its own situation as that of a prisoner. The ψυχή feels at home in the body that is its prison, which dims and hides even further the yearning for its original home[397]. This becomes evident when we consider how we human beings normally relate to their own bodies. The body is not normally recognised as something alien and unlike ourselves. We do not see ourselves as encapsulated within a shell or a prison. Rather, we see our bodies as an integral part of what we ourselves are. We are either entirely our own bodies, or, at the very least, in part our own bodies. This is to say that human beings, whose *de facto* condition, as we have seen, is the result of all the factors of restriction we have identified in the palinode, reach this stage of their descent in such a way that they are no longer able to recognize themselves as the bodiless ψυχαί the palinode describes. Rather, human beings see their bodies as an integral part of themselves, with all the conditions and restrictions that that entails. This, as we can easily see, is another element of λήθη added to the condition of the fallen souls, and the latter no longer see themselves

[396] Compare with 249d4ff.: "ἔστι δὴ οὖν δεῦρο ὁ πᾶς ἥκων λόγος περὶ τῆς τετάρτης μανίας, ἣν ὅταν τὸ τῇδέ τις ὁρῶν κάλλος, τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ἀναμιμνῃσκόμενος, πτερῶταί τε καὶ ἀναπτερούμενος προθυμούμενος ἀναπτέσθαι, ἀδυνατῶν δέ, ὄρνιθος δίκην βλέπων ἄνω, τῶν κάτω δὲ ἀμελῶν, αἰτίαν ἔχει ὡς μανικῶς διακείμενος". This particular bird looks ἄνω because, as we will see later on, the connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος becomes somehow stronger, to a limited degree. Otherwise, the bird would not even look ἄνω, but would only concentrate on what exists ἐνθάδε.

[397] Cf. *Phaedo*, 82e5ff.: "καὶ τοῦ εἱργμοῦ τὴν δεινότητα κατιδοῦσα ὅτι δι᾽ ἐπιθυμίας ἐστίν, ὡς ἂν μάλιστα αὐτὸς ὁ δεδεμένος συλλήπτωρ εἴη τοῦ δεδέσθαι". Or, to quote Victor Hugo: "L'âme aide le corps et à de certains moment le soulève. C'est le seul oiseau qui soutienne sa cage." (*Les Misérables*, Partie III, Livre 5, Chapitre II). Cf. infra, p. 544, n. 430.

as what they really are, and accept as an integral part of themselves something that is altogether alien to them. The σῶμα might be our prison, but we come to see it as if it were our own skin.

By taking away, by contracting, restricting and limiting the scope of the ψυχή's ἐπιμέλεια and by imprisoning it, the σῶμα is therefore also establishing, or at least contributing to the establishment or consolidation of a system of meaning that is radically different from the one under which the ψυχή was living before the fall. The fundamental and boundless hunger that characterized the life of the souls before the fall is now even further restricted, and has to be contained within the narrow limits defined by the σῶμα. It is through the body that the ψυχή can act and interact with what surrounds is in its new habitat ἐνθάδε.The ψυχή can only go where the σῶμα can take it and reach what the body can reach. It has to make do with what it can get in its severely constrained situation. That this is not experienced daily as a source of constant frustration and suffering, but rather as our normal condition, is the result of the overlaying of degrees of λήθη we have already discussed.

However, as it is explicitly described in the palinode, σῶμα does not provide its own vital orientation, as there seems to be no room in the palinode for something like a bodily desire[398]. This is, in a way, consistent with the arguments used to prove the ἀθανασία of the ψυχή (245c5ff.). The ψυχαί are the only source of movement, which is transmitted to every other kind of being. A being like σῶμα is ἔμψυχον as a result of the accidental embodiment of the ψυχή; its mobility is all derived from the ψυχή within. In itself, the σῶμα is inert. If it does not possess its own source of motion, it cannot pull in a different direction, like the bad horse can. This argument from consistency would be much more persuasive if we were dealing with an author other than Plato. Plato does not shy away from inconsistency when it serves its main point or when what he is trying to prove is something much vaster than what the argument is apparently trying to show. And the idea of the body as the source of its own desires and impulses, which would constitute a different, bodily, vital orientation is an inconsistency that would not in the slightest

[398] The "passivity" of the role of the body in the *Phaedrus* contrasts with the model of the *Phaedo*, where the φιλοσώματος represents the multiplicity of forces that are opposed to φιλοσοφία. The model of the *Phaedrus*, however, places the needs and desires that constitute the φιλοσώματος component within the composition of the unembodied soul itself. The original and constitutive conflict is within the soul itself, and the model suggests it is impossible to resolve entirely. See chapter III, p. 23, n. 177, above, and p. 574ff., below.

surprise most of us. In this case, he could have presented the argument for the immortality of the soul in very much the same terms as he did, whilst ignoring its consequences regarding the nature of σῶμα. He could have attributed to the σῶμα the ability to mobilize, orient, direct the soul, by being the seat of the desires and impulses that we usually consider to be "bodily".

Yet he did not choose to do that; he rather chose to be consistent. And this is significant, at least for the economy of the palinode. It means that being in a body is important as far as it corresponds to a severe contraction of the abilities of the soul. It means that the body itself is only relevant as far as it serves as an anchor that weighs down the soul and as a prison that encloses it. By doing this, it gives an advantage to the desires and impulses that lead away from ἀλήθεια, and consolidates its dominance. In a way, it seals the downward movement that characterises the condition of the souls since they have become wingless. But neither the fall nor the existence of desires and impulses that lead away from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος are attributed to the σῶμα. These are the result of the complex and conflicting constitution of the ψυχή itself. What the σῶμα does, however, is freeze that state of affairs in place by limiting the ability of the ψυχή to somehow resolve this conflict in such a way that would give once again the upper hand to the aspect represented by the charioteer. The σῶμα, the inert mass that weighs down the fallen ψυχή and restricts the scope of its ἐπιμέλεια, is therefore instrumental in turning the fall into a circumstance that will remain in place for the foreseeable future. In other words, it turns an event of succession of events, the fall, into a state.

And thus we can go back to the formula of human nature we have mentioned so many times before, and add yet another determination to it. The intrinsic connection human beings have with the superlative combination of all positive superlatives is further restricted by the fact that they are bound to a body, which limits, restrains and contracts the sphere of action of the ψυχαί and turns what would otherwise be their place of banishment into their home.

5.5. Aetiological meaning of the elements of restriction: ἀλήθεια and λήθη

In the previous sections we looked at the elements of restriction as they are presented to us in the mythical narrative. These are mostly presented covered in mythical trappings, and therefore requiring an aetiological deciphering. For this purpose we must

keep in mind something quite obvious: that our vocation for the superlative is a frustrated one. By this we mean that we are not in possession of the superlative, i.e., that our *de facto* condition is one that is far from being characterised by the possession and enjoyment of every positive superlative. From this point of view, the limitation of the effect of the superlative on our lives is not the circumstance that seems to require explanation. This appears to us as a given. Rather, what seems strange is the notion that the superlative in some way still influences and determines what we are, even if we are not for the most part able to notice it.

This apparent paradox regarding our own nature (that that which is most determining is something that remains for the most part hidden from us) is what we will be trying to understand. There is a way in which the superlative seems to take part in our lives that we can more or less easily recognise. We all have an aspiration for happiness, for the attainment and unrestricted enjoyment of a multiplicity of goods that bring joy, value and meaning to our lives. For the airborne souls of the palinode, happiness is to reach the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the superlative concentration of all positive superlatives. For us, happiness is not as clearly defined. Or, to be more precise, the perspective we have of what happiness might be is, as we have already mentioned, quite vague and undetermined – similar, to a certain extent, to the vagueness and relative undetermined nature of Socrates' description of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. We shall see, though, that in spite of all its vagueness, Socrates' perspective on the superlative is a lot more determined than our own. At the very least, it provides us with a formula, a general outline of the basic formal characteristics of the superlative. As for our understanding of happiness, its strengths and weaknesses is what we shall look at next.

When we aspire to happiness, we are yearning for the superlative, whatever that may be. But this is more than an aspiration. Happiness is not just a potentially supervenient gift to be thankful for when we get it, but to which we are not entitled. Rather, we feel cheated if we are denied happiness, we feel as if something that was owed to us had been denied. In short, we seem to believe that happiness is more than just something we want and need: it is our right. We are entitled to happiness, we seem to believe. And to be denied that right is more than just unfortunate – it is unfair.

One might object that this form of presence of the superlative in our lives is not strong and prevailing enough to match what is described in the mythical narrative. One

might observe that most of our yearnings and desires bear little relation to such lofty aspirations as happiness and most of them fail to reach towards the superlative. Happiness would then be a concern for those idle moments in which the almost constant stream of different inferior needs and solicitations give us some respite. Thinking about and aspiring for happiness would then be a game for idle dreamers, not a serious concern for serious people – least of all would it be a structural component of one's perspective.

There is, however, another way of looking at this. The vocation for the superlative is always present, even when it seems to be hidden. And this vocation can be found throughout one's whole life, even in those desires that seem to be about something other than the superlative. The fact is that each desire is not isolated in itself, but is rather part of a system of meaning that encompasses one's whole life. By this we mean that the desire of X is more than just the desire of X. One desires X on account of what one believes X is going to contribute for the constitution of a life as happy as possible. So to desire X is also to desire the happiness that X somehow entails or contributes to. Or, to be more precise, one will desire X precisely because X entails or contributes to one's happiness.

There are, however, some limitations to this neat correspondence – limitations that account for the somewhat hidden character of the superlative. One of these limitations has to do with the *de facto* limitation of what is possible to acquire and achieve. The multiplicity of desires, needs and requirements in one's life cannot be met in their totality. The aspiration is to have and enjoy more and more and more. Ideally, it is to have everything. But the different claims might compete with each other, they might even oppose each other or be incompatible with each other. So to acquire X, one might have to give up on Y, or find some sort of settlement between the different competing claims. One might not be able to pursue what one really wants because it might be incompatible with other things one might also want or need. The best possible outcome, where "possible" is one of the most important criteria, becomes what one tries to achieve. One therefore does not pursue the superlative in every individual desiderative tension, but rather try to get the best bundle of objects of need and desire possible. This requires a difficult navigation between what one wants, needs and desires, and what is possible to achieve.

Now, this navigation requires ἀλήθεια. It requires an understanding of what happiness might be, which paths may lead towards it, and which may lead away from it,

as well as the ability to understand the situation one is in. It requires, in short, a cognitive component, one that is implied in every desiderative tension. Any limitation in ἀλήθεια may therefore have a significant impact in the navigation of life at every level. At a more general level, the remarkably vague understanding we have of the superlative requires an operation of turning the formal notion of happiness into a concrete set of contents, i.e., an identification of what the superlative might be. At a more specific level, we need to understand in what way the different intermediate goals may contribute to or, on the contrary, constitute an obstacle to reaching the superlative. If we were in a situation of perfect and unlimited ἀλήθεια, we would be able to easily navigate through these obstacles, to assess what needs to be done and what aims are to be pursued. But that is not the case. The need for ἀλήθεια is not to a large extent satisfied. It is limited by the presence of its opposite, λήθη. This allows for the occurrence of all sorts of errors. One might misidentify what the superlative is; one might fail in recognising the relation between a specific goal and the superlative. One might, in short, fail the mark, make Ixion's mistake and embrace a cloud instead of Hera.

But ἀλήθεια is more than a requirement of our perspective. It is an assumption. By this we mean that the presence of ἀλήθεια is normally assumed – to such a degree that the interference of λήθη is for the most part considered to be of secondary importance and of limited consequence. The absence of ἀλήθεια is not felt to a significant degree. As we have mentioned before, this is explained by the phenomenon of compound λήθη. This λήθη, that acts as if it were a form of ἀλήθεια, when in fact it is an even deeper degree of λήθη, envelops us in such a way that our own immersion in λήθη becomes hidden from us. Not only are we to a large extent deprived of ἀλήθεια, but our own situation is withheld from us. This is what we have called compound λήθη: a λήθη that covers λήθη itself. This disguises the fact that we are now deprived to a significant degree of ἀλήθεια. But it does not cancel the yearning for ἀλήθεια. It creates the illusion that we are mostly in a situation characterized by a significant degree of ἀλήθεια, when the opposite is true – and this illusion is enough to sate one's desiderative tension towards ἀλήθεια[399].

The result of this peculiar interplay between ἀλήθεια and λήθη, where λήθη prevails over ἀλήθεια by assuming the guise of ἀλήθεια, is the establishment of a fundamentally defective perspective. The supposed focus is the superlative; or, to be more

[399] See p. 495, above.

precise, the different objects of desire are such because they are in some way related to the superlative. However, due to the defects not only in the recognition of the superlative itself, but also in the assessment of the integration of each individual object within a system of meaning whose aim is the superlative, we lose sight of the superlative, and follow aims that fail to lead us to it. This failure is itself covered in λήθη, which means that it is not for the most part experienced as a failure.

Our *de facto* situation is then that of beings whose constitutive vocation for the superlative is frustrated, but in such a way that that frustration is not experienced as such. Rather than the superlative, we content ourselves with substitutes. These substitutes are capable of sating the hunger for the superlative precisely because their true nature as mere substitutes is hidden from us. Our view of the superlative is dimmed, vague and distorted, and so it is easier for us to accept mere substitutes in its stead. But our view of the substitutes themselves is also dimmed and distorted, and so we are not able to take them for what they really are. Seen from this angle, our *de facto* situation becomes a game of shadows, where we, like Ixion, embrace clouds thinking they are Hera – not only because the cloud sort of resembles Hera, but also because we do not have a clear idea of what Hera actually looks like.

This explains why our frustrated vocation for the superlative does not put us in a state of constant and violent yearning for what we are being denied. We are given something to calm that yearning, and it subsides to the point that it seems to lose its fundamental role as a constituent of our own nature. This, at least, is the explanation the palinode gives us. The other possible explanation, the one we have already alluded to, still stands as a possibility: that the vocation for the superlative is actually an excessive and spurious component, a delusion of grandeur in a perspective that should rather learn to live within its means. The aetiological point of view does not let us decide which one of these possibilities is the right one. Plato's explanation for our *de facto* condition cannot be proved; but neither can it be disproved.

5.6. Ἀληθεία×λήθη and ἀνάμνησις

From its zenith to its nadir, we have so far followed the misadventures of the soul, through obstacles, clashes and crashes, through prison, exile and decay. We have also looked at the condition of the soul after the loss of wings and have seen how contracted,

reduced and degraded it is when compared with its situation before the fall. Through our whole analysis, we focused on the strong contrast between these two situations: the winged soul, whole and capable of reaching the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and contemplating τὰ ὄντα, and the wingless soul, mutilated and stuck on earth, stranded away from the πεδίον τῆς ἀληθείας.

We have also mentioned an important pair of opposing notions: ἀλήθεια and λήθη. Ἀληθεία is associated in the text of the palinode with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. It corresponds to the cognitive and ontological ideals that are the result of the successful access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. It is simultaneously the result of the contemplation of the οὐσία ὄντως οὖσα and a condition *sine qua non* for the maintenance of the fundamental situation that allows further moments of access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The cyclical nature of the soul's existence in its winged state accounts for the cyclical nature of its relationship with ἀλήθεια. To be in a state of ἀλήθεια is one of the fundamental objects of the fundamental hunger of the human ψυχαί: one that is hungered for in itself, but also as a fundamental property of the other superlatives.

However, what we have learned from the palinode is that ἀλήθεια may be necessary, but it is not a given. It needs to be acquired. And, for the human souls, it needs to be acquired through effort and by overcoming a multiplicity of obstacles. But we have also learned that ἀλήθεια, once acquired, is not, to use the Thucydidean phrase, a "κτῆμα ἐς αἰεί". It can be lost, and needs to be reacquired at every new stage of the cycle. This means that ἀλήθεια is, in a way, always followed by its opposite, λήθη, like a shadow, not unlike the way the force that pulls up, the wings, is always haunted by its counterpart, the weight. Even after a successful journey to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the shadow of λήθη follows the soul as a possibility that might completely change its situation for the worse. But, in the terms of the palinode, the fact that a soul is able to stay airborne means that the balance between ἀλήθεια and λήθη is in favour of the former.

The downfall changes this balance completely. Since ἀλήθεια is something that can be lost and replaced by its opposite, unless there is constant and regular contact with τὰ ὄντα, the fall, by making this contact impossible except through ἀνάμνησις, results in a steep increase in the degree of λήθη. The apparently natural tendency for λήθη takes hold and predominates. However, as we have seen when discussing the scale of βίοι, the predominance of λήθη does not entail a complete elimination of ἀλήθεια. In spite of the

increment in λήθη, there is always at least a *quantum minimum* of ἀλήθεια. This is something that will be discussed in more detail later on, when we consider the peculiar mode of understanding Socrates attributes to human beings and its dependency upon the past vision of τὰ ὄντα. For now, however, we should bear in mind that a complete absence of ἀλήθεια would entail something we have no way of representing: absolute obscurity, an original and complete absence of awareness, a perpetual night without a dawn. The fact that this is not the case, that there is any kind of awareness whatsoever for the fallen souls, i.e., for us, shows that the change in the balance of power in favour of λήθη does not result in a complete absence of ἀλήθεια.

There is always at least a remnant of ἀλήθεια. This, in the economy of the palinode, is the condition of possibility of ἀνάμνησις. The lack of direct contact with τὰ ὄντα and the loss of the ability to contemplate them does not mean that the connection to them is completely severed. We have already seen that the yearning remains, i.e., that our soul is intrinsically φιλόσοφος, at least in some degree. The contemplation of τὰ ὄντα, as a possibility, is kept as the *terminus ad quem* of human existence, even if in a very obscure way. But the connection with τὰ ὄντα is not limited to this aspect. There is also a cognitive link to τὰ ὄντα, a link that comes to the forefront through ἀνάμνησις. In other words, the soul, even after the fall, has the possibility to "remember"[400], albeit in a very peculiar way,

[400] On the notion of ἀνάμνησις see, e.g.: GULLEY, N., Plato's theory of recollection, *Classical Quarterly* 48 (1954), 194-213; ALLEN, R. E., Anamnesis in Plato's *Meno* and *Phaedo*, *Review of Metaphysics* 13 (1959-1960), 165-174; LLEDÓ, I. E., La anámnesis dialéctica en Platón, *Emerita* 29 (1961), 219-239; WALDENFELS, B., *Das Sokratische Fragen. Aporie, Elenchos, Anamnesis*, Meisenheim a. Glan, Hain, 1961; HUBER, C. E., *Anamnesis bei Plato*, München, Hueber, 1964; WATSON, G., Anamnesis bei Plato, *Philosophical Studies* 14 (1965), 262-263; DORTER, K., *The Doctrine of Recollection in Plato's* Phaedo, Diss. Pennsylvania State Univ., 1967; TIGNER, S. S., The nature of Plato's theory of anamnesis, diss. Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1968; ANDERSON, D. E., The Theory of Recollection in Plato's Meno, *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 9 (1971), 225-235; MORAVCSIK, J., Learning as recollection I, in VLASTOS, G. (ed.) *Plato. A collection of critical essays*, I: Metaphysics and epistemology, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday Anchor, 1971, 53-69; DORTER, K., Equality, recollection, and purification, *Phronesis* 17 (1972), 198-218; ACKRILL, J.L., Anamnesis in the Phaedo: Remarks on 73c-75c, in LEE, E. N., MOURELATOS, A. P. D., RORTY, R. M. (ed.), *Exegesis and Argument*. Studies in Greek Philosophy presented to Gregory Vlastos, 1973, 177-195; COBB, W. S., Anamnesis. Platonic doctrine or sophistic absurdity?, *Dialogue* (Quebec Canadian Philos. Assoc.) 12 (1973), 604-628; EBERT, T., Plato's Theory of Recollection Reconsidered. An Interpretation of *Meno* 80a-86c, *Man and World* 6 (1973), 163-181; DUNLOP, E. M., Anamnesis in the *Phaedo*, *The New Scholasticism* 49 (1975), 51-61; ROHATYN, D. A., Reflections on Meno's paradox, *Apeiron* 14 (1980), 69-73; DIGBY, T., The doctrine of recollection at Phaedo 74 A-75 D. Coherence is not enough, *Philosophia* 10-11 (1980-1981), 296-303; BEDU-ADDO, J. T., Recollection and the argument "from a hypothesis" in Plato's Meno, *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 104 (1984), 1-14; BEDU-ADDO, J. T., Sense-experience and recollection in Plato's Meno, *American Journal of Philology* 94 (1983), 228-248; MORGAN, M. L., Sense-perception and recollection in the Phaedo, *Phronesis* 29 (1984), 237-251; PETERS, J. R., *Recollection and essence in Plato's Meno*, diss. Northwestern Univ. Evanston, Ill., 1985; SCOTT, D., Platonic Anamnesis Revisited, *Classical Quarterly* 37 (1987), 346-366; LINDENMUTH, D. C., Love and recollection in Plato's Phaedo, *Ancient Philosophy* 8 (1988), 11-18; BENSON, H. H., Meno,

what it has contemplated in its previous state as a winged soul. What the soul has seen in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος will continue to be present in the soul. But the fact that this contact is indirect and not a contemplation of τὰ ὄντα, as is the case of the winged souls, make this presence weaker and less clear. If we add to this all the λήθη-creating factors that we have analysed so far in this chapter, it is not difficult to conclude that this form of remembrance and, consequently, the ἀλήθεια of the fallen souls, will in most cases have the tendency to fade. But the continued presence of some degree of ἀλήθεια, in spite of the advance of λήθη, means that human souls can correctly be described as a mixture of ἀλήθεια and λήθη. This results in a peculiar kind of awareness, which can combine both λήθη and ἀλήθεια in different degrees and in different ways. What becomes clear is that ἀνάμνησις does not correspond to an absolute alternative between λήθη and ἀλήθεια, but to the peculiar mixture of both. In a situation where λήθη seems to have the upper hand, a remnant of ἀλήθεια, a kernel of resistance to the hegemony of λήθη, a sort of Trojan horse already within λήθη's walls, allows for the appearance of ἀνάμνησις – which may

the slave-boy and the elenchus, *Phronesis* 35 (1990), 128-158; BEDU-ADDO, J. T., Sense-experience and the argument for recollection in Plato's Phaedo, *Phronesis* 36 (1991), 27-60; SCHRENK, L. P., A Middle Platonic reading of Plato's theory of recollection, *Ancient Philosophy* 11 (1991), 103-110; EBERT, T., *Sokrates als Pythagoreer und die Anamnesis in Platons Phaidon*, Stuttgart, Steiner, 1994; OSBORNE, C., Perceiving particulars and recollecting the forms in the Phaedo, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 95 (1995), 211-233; SCOTT, D., *Recollection and experience: Plato's theory of learning and its successors*, Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1995; ROBINS, I. N., Recollection and self-understanding in the Phaedo, *Classical Quarterly* 47 (1997), 438-451; GERSON, L. P., The Recollection Argument revisited, *Apeiron* 32 (1999), 1-15; KELSEY, S., Recollection in the "Phaedo*", Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* 16 (2000), 91-133; HILLER, M., Methexis, Anamnesis, Psyche: Auslegung eines Verhältnisses in Platons «Phaidon», in KOCH, D., BARBARIC, D. (ed.), *Denkwege 2*. Philosophische Aufsätze, Tübingen, Attempto, 2001, 61-76; LEE, S.-I., *Anamnesis im Menon*: Platons Überlegungen zu Möglichkeit und Methode eines den Ideen gemäßen Wissenserwerbes. Frankfurt a. M., Lang, 2001; OSEI, R. N., The argument for recollection in the "Phaedo": a defence of the standard interpretation, *Scholia* 10 (2001), 22-37; WILLIAMS, T., Two aspects of Platonic recollection, *Apeiron* 35 (2002), 131-152; DIMAS, P., Recollecting forms in the "Phaedo", *Phronesis* 48 (2003), 175-214; TULIN, A., Please remind me of anamnesis : a "double-entendre" in Plato's Phaedo, *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 75 (2003), 63-66; LATONA, M., The tale is not my own (oukh hemos ho muthos): myth and recollection in Plato, *Apeiron* 37 (2004), 181-210; FRANKLIN, L., Recollection and philosophical reflection in Plato's "Phaedo", *Phronesis* 50 (2005), 289-314; RAWSON, G., Platonic recollection and mental pregnancy, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 44 (2006), 137-155; SEDLEY, D. N., Form-particular resemblance in Plato's "Phaedo", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 106 (2006), 311-327; GONZÁLEZ, F. J., How is the truth of beings in the soul? : interpreting « anamnesis » in Plato, *Elenchos* 28 (2007), 275-301; SEDLEY, D. N., Equal sticks and stones, in SCOTT, D. (ed.), *Maieusis*: essays on ancient philosophy in honour of Myles Burnyeat, Oxford, New York, Oxford University Press, 2007, 68-86; CARVALHO, M. J., *Die Aristophanesrede in Platons Symposium.* Die Verfassung des Selbst, Würzburg, Königshausen & Neumann, 2009, 548ff.; FRANKLIN, L., "Meno's Paradox", the Slave-Boy Interrogation, and the unity of Platonic recollection, *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 47 (2009), 349-377; MORGAN, K., Inspiration, recollection, and mimesis in Plato's "Phaedrus", in: NIGHTINGALE, A., SEDLEY, D. (ed.), *Ancient models of mind : studies in human and divine rationality*, Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010, 45-63.

then cause ἀλήθεια to grow stronger, and eventually lead to a turnaround in this state of affairs, i.e., to ἀλήθεια overcoming λήθη.

There is one aspect of the relationship between the fallen souls and the πεδίον τῆς ἀληθείας that has not been emphasized so far, but that is nonetheless essential for an appropriate understanding of what is at stake in the palinode. This is an aspect that, although it is implied from the start in our comprehension of Socrates' myth as an aetiological myth (a myth that provides a causal explanation for a certain state of affairs), is best made explicit in the text at 249b5-c1[401].

This vexed passage makes explicit that having contemplated τὰ ὄντα is fundamental for the fallen souls in a different way from what we might have previously thought. Previously, we might have thought about the contemplation of τὰ ὄντα as something that provided the soul with a specific content. A soul that has contemplated τὰ ὄντα will know something, namely, τὰ ὄντα. In this sense, a soul that has had a better and more thorough contemplation (one of the souls included in the first degree of the scale of proximity and distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος) will know more, in the sense of being in possession of more cognitive contents, than, say, a soul that could only manage an intermittent view. In other words, the degrees of ἀλήθεια and λήθη would be a matter of having seen and remembering more or less of τὰ ὄντα.

But this passage paints a different picture. It explicitly states that the contemplation of τὰ ὄντα is a constitutive moment of the human perspective. This is not a matter of content as such, but rather a matter of form. By this we mean that what is at stake here is not having the knowledge of this or that particular content, but rather the mode of access to whatever appears to us. How this is possible is something we will try to understand in the next few pages. At this moment, however, we must note that this is expressed in mythological terms by the setup of a *condicio sine qua non* for the incarnation of a soul in a human body by the θεσμὸς Ἀδραστείας (248c3ff.): one needs to have had at least a glimpse of whatever resides in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος in order to be incarnated in a human body; or, seen from a different angle, all those we can recognise

[401] "οὐ γὰρ ἥ γε μήποτε ἰδοῦσα τὴν ἀλήθειαν εἰς τόδε ἥξει τὸ σχῆμα. δεῖ γὰρ ἄνθρωπον συνιέναι κατ᾽ εἶδος λεγόμενον, ἐκ πολλῶν ἰὸν αἰσθήσεων εἰς ἓν λογισμῷ συναιρούμενον" The text of this passage is problematic. See THOMPSON, *ad locum*; AST, *ad locum*; STALLBAUM; *ad locum;* ROBIN, XCIV; HACKFORTH, 86, n1; VERDENIUS, 280; MORESCHINI, C., Note critiche al Fedro di Platone, *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Classe di Lettere e Filosofia* 34 (1965), 422-432, 429; DE VRIES, *ad locum*; HEITSCH, 110ff.; SALA, 249; YUNIS, *ad locum*.

ἐνθάδε as human beings have had at least a glimpse of the beings that reside in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. By making a contrast with the animals, the palinode emphasizes the role of the contemplation of τὰ ὄντα as a constitutive element of human nature. But, although this idea is firstly presented under mythical trappings, within the mythical framework of the θεσμὸς Ἀδραστείας, the passage we are dealing with uses language that seems more appropriate for what some would call a more purely philosophical discussion. In a way, it reads like a little non-mythical intermission in this long mythical account regarding the nature of human beings.

The reason why it gives this impression of being an intermission is twofold. Firstly, the type of language used seems more technical than mythical. Αἴσθησις, λογισμός, συναίρεσις seem to be terms more adjusted to other more "technical" passages of the *corpus platonicum* than to this poetic-mythical fantasy. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, this little passage inverts the general direction the mythical narrative was following. Up until now, we have followed the misadventures of the soul from top to bottom, that is, from the heights of the region beyond the sky to the bottom of the earth. The palinode has transported us up there and then brought us back to earth. By doing this, we have been led to reinterpret what we thought we knew about the world down here under the newly shed light of what we have learned concerning the world up there. This passage, on the contrary, gives us a glimpse of how the contemplation of τὰ ὄντα actually frames, constitutes and founds the way of understanding we are familiar with. In a way, this becomes more than a glimpse when Socrates discusses the figures of the philosopher and the lover. But these two are exceptional cases that do not actually apply to the vast majority of mankind. The passage we are dealing with, on the contrary, applies to the philosopher and the lover, but also to the poet, the farmer or even the tyrant. It describes in non-mythical terms a fundamental and constitutive structure of the perspective of any human being. At the same time, however, the structure described by the passage is firmly anchored in the mythical description made so far in the text. It does not alter or revise what has been said beforehand; it just draws our attention to its consequences and makes them explicit.

By inverting the perspective we had adopted so far, i.e., by making us look at how the human soul that is the result of all the adventures and misadventures told in the myth functions, Socrates suddenly draws our attention to one of the *explananda* of the aetiological myth: our own mode of understanding. The mode of understanding

(συνιέναι) at stake goes from a multiplicity of αἰσθήσεις, collecting them into a single λογισμός.

In order to understand this brief sentence we must first pause and acknowledge that the human perspective, as we experience it, has to deal with a multiplicity of αἰσθήσεις[402]. This multiplicity of αἰσθήσεις, however, is not enough to make up our

[402] One should note that the term αἴσθησις in this passage is ambiguous, reflecting the multiplicity of uses of the term in the *corpus Platonicum*. To explore the multifaceted nature of αἴσθησις in the *corpus Platonicum* would far exceed the scope of this work. But we can acquire a rough understanding of the multiplicity of meanings this term can have by looking at three passages in three different dialogues. The first one we have already mentioned in chapter VI, *Theaetetus* 151e1ff.: "δοκεῖ οὖν μοι ὁ ἐπιστάμενός τι αἰσθάνεσθαι τοῦτο ὃ ἐπίσταται, καὶ ὥς γε νυνὶ φαίνεται, οὐκ ἄλλο τί ἐστιν ἐπιστήμη ἢ αἴσθησις.". In this passage, αἴσθησις designates the general and common experience of perceiving, grasping or seeing (in the general sense that is not limited to the visual component) something. It is used to refer to the simple fact that there is such a thing as perception, *latissimo sensu*, or awareness. It is neutral in relation to it being sense perception, or, to be more precise, it does not say anything about it, nor does it exclude any component that might exceed sense perception. In this sense, αἴσθησις is what is immediately, unconditionally and permanently happening to us for the simple fact that there is such a thing as awareness, as opposed to the complete oblivion that would correspond to the absence of awareness. This is a much more general and less determined sense than the one we can find in the *Phaedo*, where most occurrences of the term αἴσθησις are determined by the connection with sense perception, i.e. with the kind of awareness that arises from what we normally identify as bodily sources: sight, touch, hearing, smell and taste. See, e.g., *Phaedo* 83a1ff.: "ὅπερ οὖν λέγω, γιγνώσκουσιν οἱ φιλομαθεῖς ὅτι οὕτω παραλαβοῦσα ἡ φιλοσοφία ἔχουσαν αὐτῶν τὴν ψυχὴν ἠρέμα παραμυθεῖται καὶ λύειν ἐπιχειρεῖ, ἐνδεικνυμένη ὅτι ἀπάτης μὲν μεστὴ ἡ διὰ τῶν ὀμμάτων σκέψις, ἀπάτης δὲ ἡ διὰ τῶν ὤτων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων αἰσθήσεων, πείθουσα δὲ ἐκ τούτων μὲν ἀναχωρεῖν, ὅσον μὴ ἀνάγκη αὐτοῖς χρῆσθαι, αὐτὴν δὲ εἰς αὑτὴν συλλέγεσθαι καὶ ἀθροίζεσθαι παρακελευομένη, πιστεύειν δὲ μηδενὶ ἄλλῳ ἀλλ᾽ ἢ αὐτὴν αὑτῇ, ὅτι ἂν νοήσῃ αὐτὴ καθ᾽ αὑτὴν αὐτὸ καθ᾽ αὑτὸ τῶν ὄντων: ὅτι δ᾽ ἂν δι᾽ ἄλλων σκοπῇ ἐν ἄλλοις ὂν ἄλλο, μηδὲν ἡγεῖσθαι ἀληθές: εἶναι δὲ τὸ μὲν τοιοῦτον αἰσθητόν τε καὶ ὁρατόν, ὃ δὲ αὐτὴ ὁρᾷ νοητόν τε καὶ ἀιδές." In this case, the term αἴσθησις is opposed to all the cognitive components of our perspective that exceed and cannot be reduced to sense perception. Aἴσθησις would then mean something like "what is perceived through our senses". But there is yet another meaning of the term αἴσθησις that is more determined and strict than the one found in *Theaetetus* 151e1ff.. This third meaning of αἴσθησις can be found, e.g., in *Republic* VII, 523a9ff. In this passage αἴσθησις is understood not simply as sense perception, but as a form of immediate apprehension, a sort of cognitive ready-made. This will include elements of what in the previous meaning of αἴσθησις would be considered moments of νόησις and such like – as long as these were part of the immediate apprehension. In this sense, this meaning of αἴσθησις is opposed to the reflective movement that arises from the occurrence of disturbances in the otherwise peaceful immediate apprehension that characterises our perspective. And so αἴσθησις can also be understood as the opposite of reflection, of revision, of looking back at what has been seen in order to reconsider and reassess it. One should note then that in this third meaning αἴσθησις will include moments of what would in the second meaning be considered beyond αἴσθησις. It is unclear which of the multiple meanings of αἴσθησις is at stake in the passage of the *Phaedrus* we are now considering. The text itself seems to do little to enlighten us in that regard. The ambiguity seems to be on purpose, designed to keep us on our toes, actively engaging with the text. To choose one of the meanings we have roughly described is an interpretative decision. The fact that we have chosen the one in which αἴσθησις is akin to sense perception does not exclude the possibility of other interpretative decisions. See, e.g.: RITTELMEYER, F., *Thukydides und die Sophistik*, Borna-Leipzig, Noske, 1915, 165ff.; MORTON J., The development of Plato's theory of sense perception, diss. Johns Hopkins University, 1968; BONDESON, W. Perception, True Opinion and Knowledge in Plato's "Theaetetus", *Phronesis* 14 (1969), 111-122; HUART, P., *Le vocabulaire de l'analyse psychologique dans l'oeuvre de Thucydide*, Paris, Klincksieck, 1968, 168ff.; KURZ, D., *Akribeia*: Das Ideal der Exaktheit bei den Griechen bis Aristoteles, Göppingen, Alfred Kümmerle, 1970, 49, 56f.; BURNYEAT, M. F., Plato on the grammar of perceiving, *Classical Quarterly* 26 (1976), 29-51; MODRAK, D. K., Perception and judgment in the Theaetetus, *Phronesis* 26 (1981), 35-54; LLOYD, G. E. R., *Magic, Reason and Experience*: Studies in the Origins and Development of Greek Science, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979, 129; WILLINK, C. W. (ed.), *Euripides: Orestes*,

perspective. What appears before us is not simply a series of moments of αἴσθησις, each with its own specific content, without any relation with each other. We could, for example, imagine a perspective in which each αἴσθησις could only be experienced all by itself, in itself, completely isolated from any other kind of αἴσθησις. This imaginary situation does not necessarily require that the multiplicity of αἰσθήσεις be reduced to a single one. It rather implies that the multiplicity of αἰσθήσεις is not recognized as a multiplicity, but every single αἴσθησις will stand on its own, the perspective experiencing it being oblivious, at each new αἴσθησις, of any connection between them. This can happen either due to the absence of a single perspective unifying the multiple occurrences of αἴσθησις, so that to each moment of αἴσθησις corresponds its own unique perspective; or because that single perspective is unable to connect this multiplicity together, so that what appears is to it is an unrelated and disperse crowd of αἰσθήσεις.

However, this is far from what we normally experience. We experience a multiplicity of αἰσθήσεις, not only as a multiplicity, but as a multiplicity of elements that can be related with each other, with spatial and temporal relations, with differences and similarities between each other. In other words, each moment of αἴσθησις contains in itself the potential to form with other moments of αἴσθησις something that exceeds each of them. Aἴσθησις A can be related to αἴσθησις A' and these two with αἴσθησις A" and so forth. This ability to operate a συναίρεσις, to group together different αἰσθήσεις in different ways is what allows us to understand anything in the world. It is what allows me

Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986, *ad* 752; FREDE, M., *Essays in Ancient Philosophy*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1987, 3ff.; TURNBULL, R. G., Becoming and intelligibility, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy Suppl*. (1988), 1-14; FINE, G., Plato on perception: a reply to Professor Turnbull, "Becoming and intelligibility". *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy Suppl*. (1988), 15-28; VERDENIUS, W. J., "Cadmus, Tiresias, Pentheus. Notes on Euripides' "Bacchae" 170-369", *Mnemosyne* (1988), 241-268, *ad* 178; MÉCHOULAN, E., Theoria, aisthesis, mimesis et doxa, *Diogène* 151 (1990), 136-152; SILVERMAN, A., Plato on perception and "commons", *Classical Quarterly* 40 (1990), 148-175; IONNIDI, H., La sensation-perception dans le Corpus hippocratique, *Philosophia* 21-22 (1991-1992), 278-284; MARZULLO, B., *I Sofismi di Prometeo*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1993, 246ff.; MASTRONARDE, D. J. (ed.), *Euripides: Phoenissae*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994, *ad* 141-4; DAY, J. M., The theory of perception in Plato's Theaetetus 152-183, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 15 (1997), 51-80; SCHIRREN, T. - *Aisthesis vor Platon: eine semantisch-systematische Untersuchung zum Problem der Wahrnehmung*, Stuttgart, Teubner, 1998; DESCLOS, M.-L., *Aux marges des dialogues de Platon*. Essai d'histoire anthropologique de la philosophie ancienne, Grenoble, J. Millon, 2003, 57, 167; FISCHER, F., Qu'est-ce qu'une expérience « aisthétique » selon Platon ?, *Dialogue* 42 (2003), 27-52; MARCOS DE PINOTTI, G. E., «Aísthesis» y «phantasía» en Platón, Teeteto 184b-186c, *Ordia prima* 2 (2003), 23-46; GANSON, T. S., The Platonic approach to sense-perception, *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 22 (2005), 1-15; EBERT, T., Platon über den Wert der Wahrnehmung, in RAPP, C., WAGNER, T. (ed.), *Wissen und Bildung in der antiken Philosophie*, Stuttgart, Metzler, 2006, 161-176; OLIVEIRA, S., *Platão e o Cavalo de Pau: aspectos do problema da síntese e da constituição do acesso no Teeteto*, Cadernos – Centro de Estudos de Filosofia, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Porto, Fundação Eng. António de Almeida, 2015. Cf. supra, p. 342ff.

to recognize a cup of tea as a cup of tea and not as a simple series of different moments of αἴσθησις. It is what allows me to understand the cup of tea in relation to everything else that surrounds it, be it its spatial relations with what surrounds it, for example, but also its functions. It is also what allows me to recognize each cup of tea as different but the same, i.e., as different instances of the same kind of being, and not each one as a unique specimen of its own unique kind. In other words, a cup of tea – or any other being we have experience of, for that matter – would not be understood as a cup of tea, in all its complexity, without the human ability to connect different αἰσθήσεις and connect them to form a whole.

From what we have described so far, one might be inclined to believe that the λογισμοί Socrates is talking about are of empirical origin. We experience a multiplicity of αἰσθήσεις and the experience of that multiplicity will result in the constitution of a general notion, a concept of a specific being. This would mean that I recognize a cup of tea now because I have had several other experiences of cups of tea, which have allowed me to form the concept of cup of tea. This would happen based on the recognition of common aspects between the different instances, which would allow me to realise that I am in fact dealing with the same kind of being, or rather different instances of the same.

But this interpretation is completely destroyed by the connection between the establishment of a λογισμός and ἀνάμνησις made in the next sentence of the text (249c1-3)[403]. In this sentence, the connection between λογισμός and ἀνάμνησις is made clear, therefore apparently inverting the process that we have been trying to understand, the collection of multiple αἰσθήσεις into one λογισμός. We are now reminded of the facts established by the mythical narrative, namely, that our *de facto* condition is the result of a complex series of events, in other words, that our perspective is not built up from scratch by using αἰσθήσεις as building blocks, but that the structure and composition of our perspective depends on the past contemplation of τὰ ὄντα, or, to be more precise, what this stands for from an aetiological point of view. The human perspective will then have to be understood as anamnetic: to use mythical terms, as a form of remembrance of what it once saw. The λογισμός that is the result of the collection of αἰσθήσεις will, in fact be the result of an anamnetic process.

[403] "τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν ἀνάμνησις ἐκείνων ἅ ποτ' εἶδεν ἡμῶν ἡ ψυχὴ συμπορευθεῖσα θεῷ καὶ ὑπεριδοῦσα ἃ νῦν εἶναί φαμεν, καὶ ἀνακύψασα εἰς τὸ ὂν ὄντως."

This might strike us as surprising, for us that so far have followed the process of collection and found no need for anything else to form a λογισμός. But we have to remind ourselves that each αἴσθησις in itself does not contain the elements necessary for the establishment of the connections that will form the λογισμός. In other words, if we try to isolate a moment of αἴσθησις in its simplicity, we will not be able to recognize it as a moment of αἴσθησις of a cup of tea, unless we have, in some way, already with us the notion or notions needed for such recognition. Each moment of αἴσθησις, if considered in and by itself, could not determine with which other moments of αἴσθησις it is to be connected, nor how it can or must be recognised in connection with others. The process of collection is not arbitrary or random; it is rather the result of recognizing the similarities and differences, of the different relations between the multiple αἰσθήσεις. Otherwise, for example, the differences in smell, taste, temperature and circumstances in the different experiences I have had of what we normally recognise as a cup of tea could be interpreted as being as relevant for the recognition of what I happen to be experiencing at the moment as the differences between the cup of tea and a shower curtain, or any other being whatsoever. In fact, there would be no reason for me to recognise each of those experiences as being of a cup of tea, as opposed to anything else. Any combination of the different moments of αἴσθησις could lead to any other form of recognition. This implies that the process of συναίρεσις requires some kind of "logical" criterion. This criterion exceeds what is immediately given in the form of αἴσθησις, but it is also a fundamental component of the different moments of αἴσθησις themselves. These are only recognized as being what they are, in their connection with each other, in virtue of what exceeds αἴσθησις. In other words, αἴσθησις has already involved in its own composition something that exceeds αἴσθησις itself.

The above, however, is a simplified explanation of a much more complex phenomenon. In fact, for the purposes of this account, we have wittingly overlooked a fundamental aspect: the fact that something like a cup of tea and such like are not simple, but rather complex beings. To be more precise, not only are these beings composed of a multiplicity of moments, which are themselves beings, but also this multiplicity appears to us all mingled together, confused, in an indistinct and undifferentiated way. This is a complex multiplicity where the different components are mixed together, as when water and wine are poured into the same vessel, and it becomes impossible to distinguish where the wine ends and the water begins. And so the process we have roughly described above

becomes a lot more complex. The συναίρεσις is not just of a multiplicity of instances of cup of tea, but is already in operation for the experience of something like a cup of tea to be possible in the first place. The different moments that compose the cup of tea are already mingled together, not in a chaotic and meaningless way, but in such a way that we are able to recognise something as precisely that – a cup of tea. This is so much so that the different components, mingled together, as if disappear and become subsumed under the recognition of that specific being they compose.

But there is yet another aspect to this we must consider. One of the consequences of this more complex picture of how αἴσθησις occurs is that λογισμός comes into play much sooner than what one might otherwise have expected. It is an integral part of the constitution of each moment of αἴσθησις. By this we mean that in the very constitution of every αἴσθησις there are decisive elements of something that goes beyond αἴσθησις. A single αἴσθησις of a cup of tea is made up of a multiplicity of moments, but these moments are not just "aesthetic" themselves. For each αἴσθησις includes a multiplicity of notions and theses within its own constitution. And so a single instance of a cup of tea involves notions such as diachronic identity, simultaneity, predication, and many others, without which our experience of this particular cup of tea would be, if not impossible, at least radically different from what we usually have[404]. So rather than λογισμός emerging from the repeated experience of similar αἰσθήσεις, it is already implied in each moment of

[404] Each moment of αἴσθησις is made of these and other notions. Chief among them is the notion of predication. Predication refers to the fact that each determination is not an isolated event; rather, they establish connections with one another, they belong to one another, in spite of their difference and individual identity. And so whiteness and sheet of paper are two different determinations, and yet they can relate to one another in such a way that the sheet of paper can be white, i.e. can contain the determination of whiteness. There are, however, other notions involved in the recognition of such a thing as a cup of tea, i.e. other notions that are predicated to any being and that determine the way in which it is recognised. Diachronic identity is such a notion. This is the maintenance of identity through time, i.e. A in the moment of time t_1 is understood as the same A in the moment of time t_{-1}, and will remain so in the moment t_2, and so on. In other words, the passage of time by itself does not lead to the complete disappearance of what has appeared before, followed by the inauguration of something completely new afterwards. Another is simultaneity refers to the peculiar fact that every determination that constitutes each moment of our awareness exists at the same time as all the others. And so each moment in time contains everything in the world: this page, all of it and every part of it, but also this room, the trees and the birds outside, the contents of the British Museum, my grandmother and the Pope, each and every single human being alive at the moment, including those who have just been born and those who are about to die, tears of joy and tears of sadness, every feeling of hope and every feeling of despair, every act of kindness and every act of cruelty, all dreams, all conversations, all screams, all laughter, everything that is loved and everything that is hated, and everything in between. Everything that exists at this very moment, everything that is experienced, done, thought, imagined, enjoyed, endured and suffered, every living being and the remains of every dead one, in short, everything whatsoever that might exist now shares the same "now", is contained within the same universal temporal vessel. Without any of these determinations – and many others besides these – something like a cup of tea would not be recognised in the way it is.

αἴσθησις. The presence of λογισμοί is not a supervenient moment in the constitution of our perspective; rather, our perspective is intrinsically and originally made up of λογισμοί.

What becomes clear from what we have seen so far is that within each moment of αἴσθησις there is always something that exceeds αἴσθησις, something that goes beyond αἴσθησις. This is all the more important considering that, as we have seen, this excessive element, so to speak, is a crucial component of αἴσθησις itself, and, *a fortiori*, of our whole perspective. And so there are what we might describe as extrinsic elements determining in a decisive way each moment of αἴσθησις. Each moment of αἴσθησις includes more than it seems in its own constitution. These elements operate for the most part silently, implicitly, without us being aware of them. They only come to the forefront as a result of a change in our attention, whenever for some reason we are forced to focus on any of these "excessive" determinations. Most of the time, these theses and notions appear mingled, mixed up, diluted in the complexity that each moment of αἴσθησις and each being we normally have access to are made of. But whenever this usual distraction is interrupted we are faced with a different and perhaps more complicated problem. When these elements come to the forefront, they do not appear as something we are able to recognise or understand. Rather, they appear as something that runs away from our grasp, that does not let itself be caught, that we are unable to reach. All these metaphors mean to say the following: that these notions and theses that make up our perspective lack in intelligibility. When we confront these notions, say, diachronic identity or simultaneity, or any other of the many that make up our perspective, we find that we do not comprehend them. We do not understand what they themselves are, what they mean. They appear as if they were encrypted, as questions to be answered, but whose answer is far from immediately available. The consequence of this is that, instead of the clarity and intelligibility that is usually assumed to characterise our perspective, we realise that our perspective is riddled with enigmas. As we shall see later on, the recognition of the enigmatic character of the notions that make up our perspective creates a tension that sends us towards something that exceeds what is immediately available.

5.7. Ἀνάμνησις in the *Meno* and the *Phaedo*

What we have seen just now puts us on track to understand the peculiar role ἀνάμνησις plays in the *Phaedrus*. However, in order for us to better understand what this role exactly is, we need to take a look at two texts of the *corpus platonicum* where ἀνάμνησις is the object of particular attention and development: the *Meno* and the *Phaedo*.

In the *Meno* (80d5ff.), the notion of ἀνάμνησις is introduced in the sequence of the paradox presented by Meno. This paradox states the impossibility of inquiring after something one does not know, since, if we do not know something, we do not know what we should be looking for; by the same token, even if we found what we were looking for, we would not be able to recognize it as such. This paradox is a version of the eristic paradox Socrates himself paraphrases in response to Meno: one will not look for something one already knows, because there is no point to it; one will not look for something one does not know, because one does not even know what to look for[405]. The paradox assumes that our relationship with any knowable is an absolute alternative: one either knows something, therefore making any kind of inquiry regarding it altogether pointless; or one does not know it at all, and is in a state of complete and absolute λήθη regarding it. The eristic paradox presents knowledge as a zero-sum phenomenon: either one knows or one does not know – there is no middle ground[406].

[405] 80e1ff.: "μανθάνω οἷον βούλει λέγειν, ὦ Μένων. ὁρᾷς τοῦτον ὡς ἐριστικὸν λόγον κατάγεις, ὡς οὐκ ἄρα ἔστιν ζητεῖν ἀνθρώπῳ οὔτε ὃ οἶδε οὔτε ὃ μὴ οἶδε; οὔτε γὰρ ἂν ὅ γε οἶδεν ζητοῖ—οἶδεν γάρ, καὶ οὐδὲν δεῖ τῷ γε τοιούτῳ ζητήσεως—οὔτε ὃ μὴ οἶδεν—οὐδὲ γὰρ οἶδεν ὅτι ζητήσει."

[406] Cf. *Theatetus* 188a1ff.. This passage does not refer to the eristic paradox as such, but it brings forth the assumptions on which it is based: we either know something or we do not – there is nothing in between. This is a natural and spontaneous tendency of our perspective: the rejection of the possibility of there being something μεταξύ between knowing and not knowing. This basic assumption of the eristic paradox is one that we tend to spontaneously endorse. The eristic paradox is therefore more than just a sophistic ploy. Rather, it gives voice to the ἀπορίαι that result from this particular understanding of knowledge. See OLIVEIRA, *op. cit.*, 151ff. OLIVEIRA (158) provides us with a catalogue of passages in the *Theaetetus* where this absolute alternative is emphasized. See, e.g.: "οὐκοῦν τόδε γ᾽ ἔσθ᾽ ἡμῖν περὶ πάντα καὶ καθ᾽ ἕκαστον, ἤτοι εἰδέναι ἢ μὴ εἰδέναι;" (188a1); "ἐπείπερ πάντ᾽ ἢ ἴσμεν ἢ οὐκ ἴσμεν" (188c6). See also: 188a6; 188a7-9; 188a10ff.; 199a7-9. The eristic paradox shows what our distracted perspective does not usually grasp: the consequences of this assumption on the process of acquiring new knowledge, of expanding our cognitive patrimony. It reveals, not without reason, that such a view of knowledge makes this impossible. Or, to be more precise: the thesis that our relationship with knowledge is a zero-sum phenomenon and the thesis that states that going in search of and acquiring new knowledge is somehow possible are incompatible. This matter becomes more unclear when we consider those objects of knowledge that are complex. In this case, there is a tendency to try to escape from the terms assumed by the eristic paradox by taking a *partim*/*partim* approach. Then, regarding complex objects of knowledge, one would state that one knows certain aspects of them, while not knowing others. And so one would break the absolute alternative asserted by the eristic paradox by knowing and not knowing the same complex object, i.e. by knowing some and not knowing other parts of the same complex object. This, however, is a misunderstanding – although one that we spontaneously and distractedly tend to adhere to. What matters in the eristic paradox is the absence of any connection between what we know and what we do not know. In other words, the fact that

Socrates' first approach to this paradox is to invoke myths and stories and the sayings of the poets regarding immortality and reincarnation in order to establish from a position of authority the existence of ἀνάμνησις. According to the stories mentioned by Socrates, the soul has been born and reborn several times and there is nothing it has not learned[407]. The soul knows everything, therefore, it is able to "remember". Socrates goes on to boldly state that all inquiry (τὸ ζητεῖν) and all learning (τὸ μανθάνειν) are, in fact, ἀνάμνησις. The claim is quite extreme: every cognitive content is the result of ἀνάμνησις. That is to say that everything one might learn is in fact a recovery of a cognitive content one had previously known but forgotten in the meantime. This solves the eristic paradox by asserting that there is no such thing as complete absence of knowledge about anything whatsoever. On the contrary, somehow everyone already knows everything about everything – but that universal and total knowledge is for the most part dormant, waiting to be brought back to light. In other words, we are the bearers of a global ἀλήθεια that is covered or hidden through and through by λήθη, without, however, being cancelled by it. This is dogmatically stated. There is no argument or discussion as such. The existence of ἀνάμνησις as remembrance of a knowledge acquired during successive prior lives serves as the basis for the subsequent discussion, but it is just accepted as a fact at this stage in the dialogue.

What Socrates gives to Meno, though, is a "practical demonstration" of this statement. This practical demonstration consists in an interrogation of a house-slave of Meno's regarding geometry (82b1ff.). By careful questioning, Socrates guides the slave through three stages regarding the content they are trying to uncover. The first stage is, to use the terminology we have adopted in this study, one of compound ignorance or compound λήθη, an ignorance that ignores itself as such: the slave is convinced that he knows the answer, without in fact knowing it; he does not know that he does not know. But, when shown that his answer is incorrect, the slave is released from that stage into the

there is no notification or presentation of that which we do not know means that there is not relationship whatever with that which we do not know. In the case of partial knowledge, the relationship between the parts we know and the parts we do not know is exactly that described by the eristic paradox: those we do know, we know; those we do not know, we do not know. Without any notification of what we do not know, any kind of search for it becomes impossible.

[407] 81c4ff.: "ἅτε οὖν ἡ ψυχὴ ἀθάνατός τε οὖσα καὶ πολλάκις γεγονυῖα, καὶ ἑωρακυῖα καὶ τὰ ἐνθάδε καὶ τὰ ἐν Ἅιδου καὶ πάντα χρήματα, οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτι οὐ μεμάθηκεν: ὥστε οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν καὶ περὶ ἀρετῆς καὶ περὶ ἄλλων οἷόν τ᾽ εἶναι αὐτὴν ἀναμνησθῆναι, ἅ γε καὶ πρότερον ἠπίστατο. ἅτε γὰρ τῆς φύσεως ἁπάσης συγγενοῦς οὔσης, καὶ μεμαθηκυίας τῆς ψυχῆς ἅπαντα, οὐδὲν κωλύει ἓν μόνον ἀναμνησθέντα—ὃ δὴ μάθησιν καλοῦσιν ἄνθρωποι—τἆλλα πάντα αὐτὸν ἀνευρεῖν, ἐάν τις ἀνδρεῖος ᾖ καὶ μὴ ἀποκάμνῃ ζητῶν: τὸ γὰρ ζητεῖν ἄρα καὶ τὸ μανθάνειν ἀνάμνησις ὅλον ἐστίν."

second stage: the stage of self-aware ignorance. He now knows that he does not know and, freed from his previous preconceptions, can now embark into an honest and unhindered inquiry. The skilful questioning of the slave by Socrates results, after a while, in the correct answer. He is now in the third stage: he knows. Before the questioning, the slave had had no kind of training in geometry. He apparently got the right answer by reasoning through the examples provided by Socrates, and by being guided by his questions. The answers, both the wrong and the right ones, were all his, according to Socrates. This shows Meno that one will have δόξαι even regarding something one does not know anything about. Through exact and insistent questioning, and in the absence of any teaching, i.e., of any positive transmission of cognitive contents, one will be able to come to know virtually anything. This seems to confirm the Socrates' thesis regarding ἀνάμνησις. Since there is no positive intake of contents, there is no true acquisition of knowledge: there is a recovering or re-grasping of it, in other words, a remembering, an ἀνάμνησις.

In this passage memory appears as a sign that the very assumptions of the eristic paradox are wrong. As we have seen, the paradox assumes that knowledge is a zero-sum phenomenon: you either have it, or you do not have it at all. But there is at least one aspect of our perspective in which this absolute alternative does not apply: memory. This, as we shall see, is what Socrates takes as the model for the whole of our perspective. Let us then take a closer look at the model at stake here. The relationship we have with the contents of our memory is one of both having and not having them. We have them inasmuch as we have already had them, and they are somewhere in our memory, so that we cannot say that we do not know them at all. But, on the other hand, we do not know them, since they are still hiding somewhere, waiting to be retrieved if possible. And we do not know that we know them.

This becomes more evident if we imagine what the process of cataloguing all the contents in our memory would entail. This requires one to bring back to the forefront a myriad of different contents. It is as if there is a focal point, to which the contents are brought. We have a relatively clear presentation of the contents at that focal point. The relationship with the contents outside of that focal point, however, is more confusing. First of all, taken as a whole, we do not have a clear presentation of the limits of our memory; but we do know that it does not include an undetermined number of cognitive contents we have never had access to. The boundaries are fuzzy, but we know they are

there, somewhere. Of what is outside those boundaries we have no presentation whatever in our memory. But of what is inside the boundaries but still outside the focal point we have a peculiar type of presentation. What appears in our focus is but a small portion of the whole contents of our memory. As we bring more and more contents to the forefront, we realise that the process is seemingly endless: we do not know when it will finish, since the contents keep appearing, as far as we search. The contents are in some cases connected with each other – so much so that when we bring up one, it pulls others related to it, as if they were attached to each other. And as they come into our focus, they also quickly leave, returning to the state between the clear presentation and the absence of contact that characterises the outside of the focal point.

But our relationship with each individual content of our memory as it is out of the focus is peculiar. Before the contents come to the focal point, we have no presentation of them. It is as if there is no contact with that particular content. But the effectiveness of their appearance in the focal point shows us that the contact we had with it was not equal to 0. It is as if it were there somewhere, ready to be brought up. Once it is before us in the focal point, it does not appear as something completely new. Rather, it appears as something we had already known, but had since faded away – like an old acquaintance that calls in for a visit after having been absent for a while[408]. The difference between having something somewhere in one's memory and bringing it to the forefront is therefore not a difference between 0 and 1. Rather, it is the difference between something that is 1 and something that is more than 0 and that might become 1, once it reappears before us. This bringing up the contents of one's memory is one modality of ἀνάμνησις. One calls to mind, so to speak, whatever is lurking in one's memory. As it emerges from its concealment, it reveals itself. As it arrives at our focus, our recognition of it becomes 1. But beforehand our perspective of it was not 0. Rather, we somehow knew it, although

[408] In the end, however, a complete catalogue of the contents of our memory would be impossible. For as soon as some contents are brought up to our attention, the previous ones fade again into the background. They revert from being 1 to being something different but more than 0. A complete catalogue would require the ability to have before us clearly at the same time every single content of our memory. This is a seemingly impossible task, not only due to the limitations in our ability to focus on all the possible contents of our memory, but also because these seem to be all too vast, to the point of us losing sight of what and how much of it there is. See AUSTEN, J., *Mansfield Park*, chapter XXII: "If any one faculty of our nature may be called more wonderful than the rest, I do think it is memory. There seems something more speakingly incomprehensible in the powers, the failures, the inequalities of memory, than in any other of our intelligences. The memory is sometimes so retentive, so serviceable, so obedient; at others, so bewildered and so weak; and at others again, so tyrannic, so beyond control! We are, to be sure, a miracle every way; but our powers of recollecting and of forgetting do seem peculiarly past finding out."

we were not aware of it. We had already had cognitive access to it in the past, and this is what allows us to recognise that particular content as something not entirely new, but as something revisited, reencountered, rediscovered.

But there is another modality of ἀνάμνησις, one that is the more relevant for understanding our relationship with knowledge, and to challenge the assumptions of the eristic paradox. This is what we may call a hindered ἀνάμνησις. In this form of ἀνάμνησις, the tension towards the retrieval of what has been forgotten, but is still somehow in our memory, becomes salient. In the most common cases, ἀνάμνησις is effective: the content is brought to the focal point, without any delays in the transition. In others, however, there is a delay. In these cases, there is a tension that resides in the fact that there is some form of difficulty or hindrance, that the content is somehow slippery and difficult to grasp. Hindered ἀνάμνησις occurs, for example, if one is trying to remember someone's name, or a telephone number, or any other content one *knows* one has a memory of, but that at that moment is having trouble recollecting. One has not yet brought that specific content to the focus, and, as such, one does not really know it in the full sense of the word. And yet, one's relationship with that specific content is not exactly 0. It is more than 0, but less than 1. In the case of hindered ἀνάμνησις, the relationship we have with the content we are trying to retrieve but have not brought to the focal point yet is stronger than the one we have with the content outside of the focal point in the case of effective ἀνάμνησις. There is some sort of presentation of what is missing. But we become aware of the content as it runs away from us, as something we are chasing but resists being caught. The transition from 0 to 1 is therefore difficult, as if it were internally hobbled by the presence of λήθη. But this hindrance is countered by the tension towards the content that escapes us and which we are in the process of chasing. The process of hindered ἀνάμνησις consists in a transition between something more than the complete absence of the content and something less than its full presence. It takes the relatively small degree of presence from which all memory starts to a higher degree.

Regarding memory, we are always μεταξύ: somewhere in between a complete absence of a specific content, and its full presence. Moreover, memory is made of a gradation between these two extremes. There is, in fact, a multiplicity of intermediate moments between the two extremes, a multiplicity that constitutes a vast territory to be crossed from one side to the other. The crossing can be relatively easy, as in effective ἀνάμνησις, or fraught with obstacles, as with hindered ἀνάμνησις. But, as with other

forms of gradation we have already mentioned in this study, the initial moment is not 0. There is already from the start some degree of presence of the content in the memory, however minimal it may be. It does not, however, necessarily lead to a full presence of the content. Hindered ἀνάμνησις represents an approximation to the full presence of the content, not the bringing forth of it in full. At each intermediary moment, the final success, even if possible, is not assured. Be it hindered or effective, ἀνάμνησις is a moment of ἀλήθεια. But it is a moment of ἀλήθεια that can only occur on the basis of a previous remnant of ἀλήθεια within the predominance of λήθη. And it is this predominance of λήθη that has to be overcome at each moment.

But Socrates does more than just present a phenomenon within our perspective that contradicts the assumptions of the eristic paradox. Socrates' claim is much more ambitious: our own perspective is anamnetic through and through. That is to say that every cognitive content emerges from memory and every apparently new content is the result of ἀνάμνησις. The moments we understand as learning and remembering correspond to partial moments of uncovering what was hidden by λήθη, thereby letting the underlying ἀλήθεια shine through. It is as if our whole perspective were originally a global moment of ἀλήθεια, a total ἀλήθεια, which was subsequently hindered and covered by λήθη. In other words, what is at first identified as the peculiar nature of memory becomes a model that is applied to the whole universe of our perspective. But this global ἀλήθεια was subjected to an extraordinary contraction – and so for the most part our relationship is more than 0 but less than 1. This contraction is such that not even an iota was reduced to 0. In our relationship with any cognitive content whatsoever there is no degree 0. Rather, the starting point is always more than 0. On the contrary, there is always in every respect a *quantum minimum* of ἀλήθεια, even under the hegemony of λήθη. So one is never at a degree zero of ἀλήθεια. Neither is one in complete possession of it. The total ἀλήθεια asserted by the mythological setup is not something that is immediately available, due to the substantial obstacle of λήθη. But the presence of λήθη does not cancel the global presence of ἀλήθεια. It rather masks it, hides it and hinders its manifestation. So in what regards knowledge and its absence, or ἀλήθεια and λήθη, the model put forward in the passage of the *Meno* we have looked into is one that presents our perspective as being μεταξύ between knowledge and its complete absence, between total ἀλήθεια and total λήθη. It is ἀλήθεια wrapped up in λήθη, or λήθη that envelops ἀλήθεια without eliminating it – so much so that each moment of what we call learning or

remembering (each individual moment of ἀλήθεια) is as small tear in the wrap that hides ἀλήθεια. Ἀλήθεια emerges from λήθη, or, seen from another angle, λήθη contains within itself ἀλήθεια. It is because our perspective is μεταξύ between ἀλήθεια and λήθη that it is possible to expand one's cognitive patrimony. Hence one such as Meno's slave is able to progress from a particularly serious case of λήθη into a form of ἀλήθεια regarding a specific matter. Accepting Socrates' account, ἀλήθεια was already there; it was not imparted, given, injected from outside. Somehow, within the λήθη, ἀλήθεια was hiding – and it revealed itself only after what we called compound λήθη, the λήθη that masks itself as ἀλήθεια and usurps its place, was revealed for what it really is. The λήθη that remained was a λήθη understood as such, as the opposite of ἀλήθεια, as something to be overcome.

The mythical setup of this passage of the *Meno* virtually equates learning with remembering. It is this equation that allows one to overcome the difficulties identified in the eristic paradox. However, taken at face value, this is an argument that depends on the assumption that there is such a thing as the pre-existence of the soul, that the soul in its previous existence actually had cognitive access to everything, and so on. Without this set of assumptions, some might say, the argument collapses and the assumptions of the eristic paradox stand. But there is another way of looking at this matter. One does not need to believe that our soul existed before we were born (and that we have somehow had some sort of universal cognitive access to everything whatsoever during that time) for the conception of ἀνάμνησις presented in the *Meno* to be significant for our understanding of our own perspective. Rather, the pre-existence of the soul can be seen as an aetiological myth. As such, it does not need to be taken literally for the aetiological description that lies underneath to be valid. In other words, one can read all of this *as if* the soul had pre-existed this current life and had cognitive access to everything whatsoever[409]. It can be interpreted as just a convenient way of expressing the following: that the human perspective is a mixture of ἀλήθεια and λήθη, in such a way that there is always a *quantum minimum* of ἀλήθεια at the heart of the preponderance of λήθη. It is because of this intrinsic and irremovable presence of ἀλήθεια within λήθη that one can go about searching for new knowledge, and not remain trapped, as the eristic paradox states, in the narrow corner of what we already know, deprived of the possibility of knowing more. The "mechanism" through which from the predominance of λήθη one is able to bring

[409] See p. 389, above.

ἀλήθεια to the forefront remains intact, even if we deny the explanatory validity of the myth. What Socrates did was to show a fundamental structure of our perspective by invoking a myth: even without the myth, the structure remains the same.

How it is possible for λήθη to contain within itself ἀλήθεια is something we must now try to understand. For this purpose we will find some very helpful insights in the treatment of the notion of ἀνάμνησις in the *Phaedo*.

In the *Phaedo* (72e3ff.), ἀνάμνησις is introduced in the context of the discussion regarding the immortality of the ψυχή. It is, however, used to prove not that the soul will survive death, but that it has existed before our current birth[410]. In the context of the *Phaedo*, where the dying Socrates seems to defend the idea of metempsychosis, this does not seem as incongruent as a cursory consideration of this might suggest. In any case, regardless of the argumentative effectiveness of the invocation of ἀνάμνησις to back up the thesis of the immortality of the soul, by implying that the soul pre-existed the current life, he is stating that the soul is, in a way, "larger than life". It exceeds, according to this argument, the bounds of the time commonly understood as life.

But, unlike the *Phaedrus*, Socrates does not make use of a myth to explore this idea in the *Phaedo*. He tries to prove it by using rational arguments. More than that, he seems to use the opposite method employed in the *Phaedrus*: instead of telling a story about a previous life we had no knowledge of before being told about it by Socrates, in the *Phaedo*, Socrates makes use of common experiences to make his point regarding ἀνάμνησις. His starting point is the example of the ἐραστής who, by seeing a lyre or a piece of clothing or any other object belonging to the beloved, is reminded of the beloved (73d2-7)[411]. The lyre is not the same as a human being; knowing a lyre does not necessarily imply knowledge of a specific human being, nor the other way around; but seeing a lyre makes the ἐραστής remember his ἐρώμενος. From the experience of A, we are reminded of B. This is just one of the several examples used by Socrates to illustrate definition of ἀνάμνησις at 73c3ff.[412]. One has a moment of ἀνάμνησις when, as a result

[410] "καὶ μήν, ἔφη ὁ Κέβης ὑπολαβών, καὶ κατ᾽ ἐκεῖνόν γε τὸν λόγον, ὦ Σώκρατες, εἰ ἀληθής ἐστιν, ὃν σὺ εἴωθας θαμὰ λέγειν, ὅτι ἡμῖν ἡ μάθησις οὐκ ἄλλο τι ἢ ἀνάμνησις τυγχάνει οὖσα, καὶ κατὰ τοῦτον ἀνάγκη που ἡμᾶς ἐν προτέρῳ τινὶ χρόνῳ μεμαθηκέναι ἃ νῦν ἀναμιμνῃσκόμεθα."

[411] "οὐκοῦν οἶσθα ὅτι οἱ ἐρασταί, ὅταν ἴδωσιν λύραν ἢ ἱμάτιον ἢ ἄλλο τι οἷς τὰ παιδικὰ αὐτῶν εἴωθε χρῆσθαι, πάσχουσι τοῦτο: ἔγνωσάν τε τὴν λύραν καὶ ἐν τῇ διανοίᾳ ἔλαβον τὸ εἶδος τοῦ παιδὸς οὗ ἦν ἡ λύρα; τοῦτο δέ ἐστιν ἀνάμνησις"

[412] "ἆρ᾽ οὖν καὶ τόδε ὁμολογοῦμεν, ὅταν ἐπιστήμη παραγίγνηται τρόπῳ τοιούτῳ, ἀνάμνησιν εἶναι; λέγω δὲ τίνα τρόπον; τόνδε. ἐάν τίς τι ἕτερον ἢ ἰδὼν ἢ ἀκούσας ἤ τινα ἄλλην αἴσθησιν λαβὼν μὴ μόνον ἐκεῖνο γνῷ,

of having an αἴσθησις of something, one has in mind not only that of which one has an αἴσθησις, but also something else[413]. The αἴσθησις of A results in a co-representation of B, in the same way that seeing a piece of clothing results in an image of one's beloved or, as another of Socrates' examples, seeing a portrait of Simmias reminds one of Cebes and vice-versa[414]. This means that the presentation of something is not isolated within itself, it is not just itself ("μὴ μόνον ἐκεῖνο") but rather brings forward the presentation of something different from itself, something other – "οὗ μὴ ἡ αὐτὴ ἐπιστήμη ἀλλ᾽ ἄλλη"[415]. This constitutes a special modality of the intrinsically transitive nature of our perspective, where each different moment of apprehension is not just closed within itself, but is associated with and brings along with it other αἰσθήσεις.

To this Socrates adds that this phenomenon occurs mainly (μάλιστα) regarding things that have been forgotten (ἐπελέληστο) because of time or lack of attention. Something that has been forgotten, i.e., immersed in λήθη after having been known, is brought back from λήθη, through contact with something else. It is apparently not difficult to explain this to someone, since it is a common enough experience.

There is, however, another modality of ἀνάμνησις besides the one illustrated by the example of the lyre and the ἐρώμενος. This second modality of ἀνάμνησις is what Socrates designates as ἀφ᾽ ὁμοίων, in contrast with the previous one, ἀπὸ ἀνομοίων (74a2)[416]. This distinction brings to the forefront a crucial aspect of ἀνάμνησις: the fact that it establishes an association between two different things. Some of these associations are between things that are dissimilar to each other; others are between things that are similar. Among the latter there is a special modality of ἀνάμνησις ἀφ᾽ ὁμοίων that is of particular importance to our understanding of what is at stake in the ἀνάμνησις of the

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ἀλλὰ καὶ ἕτερον ἐννοήσῃ οὗ μὴ ἡ αὐτὴ ἐπιστήμη ἀλλ᾽ ἄλλη, ἆρα οὐχὶ τοῦτο δικαίως λέγομεν ὅτι ἀνεμνήσθη, οὗ τὴν ἔννοιαν ἔλαβεν;".

[413] In this passage, αἴσθησις does not merely mean sense perception as opposed to what goes beyond sense perception and influences and determines our perspective. Rather, αἴσθησις should be understood *latissimo sensu*, i.e. as the immediate apprehension of something, in which both sense perception and the rest are fused and experienced together in what we have previously called a "ready made".

[414] 273d6: "ὥσπερ γε καὶ Σιμμίαν τις ἰδὼν πολλάκις Κέβητος ἀνεμνήσθη, καὶ ἄλλα που μυρία τοιαῦτ᾽ ἂν εἴη."

[415] 73c8.

[416] "ἆρ᾽ οὖν οὐ κατὰ πάντα ταῦτα συμβαίνει τὴν ἀνάμνησιν εἶναι μὲν ἀφ᾽ ὁμοίων, εἶναι δὲ καὶ ἀπὸ ἀνομοίων;"

Phaedrus: the one that occurs in the connection between an image and the thing of which the image is an image, "the thing itself", αὐτὸ τὸ δεῖνα[417].

Now, we must bear in mind that images possess a peculiar ontological structure. Images constitute a perfect instance of something that is in itself μὴ μόνον ἐκεῖνο, that brings with itself something besides itself, something other or different. They are intrinsically evocative or referential: they point out towards something else, in which their own identity resides. Their own identity is therefore constitutively "extroverted", as it were, outside themselves. It is to be found in the thing of which they are images – "the thing itself". What characterises an image as such is the fact that it bears an identity that belongs not to itself but to another. In other words, the image lives with a borrowed identity. It is in this sense that the relationship between image and "thing itself" is anamnetic: the image leads us towards "the thing itself" in such a way that it is as if it were transparent in relation to it. When one sees an image, one does not just see an image – or even mostly an image. Rather, one sees "the thing itself" through the image, i.e., whatever the image is an image of. And this happens even when we are clearly aware that the image is an image. This becomes clearer when we consider how effective an image can be in putting us in contact with that of which it is an image. Our own reflection in a mirror is a good example of that. When looking at our own reflection in a mirror, either shaving or doing something else that requires looking in a mirror, we are aware of the fact that that is not "the thing itself", or another person that happens to look exactly like us. We know that it is an image, and yet the image fulfils its role so successfully we can use it to guide us in our task. Every gesture we see being made in the mirror is seen as a gesture we ourselves are making. It is *our* hand that is moving; *our* face that is being touched. Whatever we see happening in the mirror is happening to *us*, because what we see in there is *us*. The fact that is a mere reflection does not embarrass us in the least. We know it is just an image, but it is precisely because it is an image that it puts us in contact with that of which it is an image. The image is as if it were a window to "the thing itself". This is what we might call the strength of the image: its nature is such that it brings "the

[417] In this context, the phrase "the thing itself" means only that of which the image is an image. It is, so to speak, the correlate of the referential power of the image. This phrase does not imply that "the thing itself" exists outside and independently of the access to it provided by the image, as we shall see. Cf. supra, p. 338.

thing itself" to the forefront, while retreating to the background. Thus it reveals "the thing itself".

There is, however, an intrinsic weakness to the image. It might point out towards "the thing itself", it might put us before "the thing itself", while making itself as inconspicuous as possible, and yet the image is not "the thing itself". The image assumes an identity that is not its own. It presents itself as something that it is not, "the thing itself", to the point that, in some cases, one might even mistake the image for "the thing itself". This usurpation of identity is not accidental, but rather a constitutive characteristic of the image as image. The image has no identity but the one that belongs to the thing it is an image of. This is what allows the image to immediately put us in contact with "the thing itself". If it is successful in doing that, the strange nature of the image as image does not become salient: it can be recognised as an image, but what we see in the image is "the thing itself" of which the image is an image. However, if it does not put one in "the thing itself", if its evocative power is somehow suspended, it fails as an image. In its failure, what becomes evident is the image in all its strangeness: something whose whole identity is to point out towards something else. But the image's success is always limited: it pretends to be "the thing itself", but it is doomed to fall short of being "the thing itself"[418]. It assumes an identity that is not its own; it wants to be what it is not[419]. This mixture of strength and weakness is what makes images at the same time so alluring and so disappointing: they promise to bring us something, and put it almost within our reach, but there is always an unsurmountable distance, and what the image offers us escapes our grasp[420].

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[418] 74a4ff.: "ἀλλ᾽ ὅταν γε ἀπὸ τῶν ὁμοίων ἀναμιμνήσκηταί τίς τι, ἆρ᾽ οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον τόδε προσπάσχειν, ἐννοεῖν **εἴτε τι ἐλλείπει** τοῦτο κατὰ τὴν ὁμοιότητα εἴτε μὴ ἐκείνου οὗ ἀνεμνήσθη;" Through this whole passage we can find other formulations of the intrinsically flawed nature of images: "ἢ ἐνδεῖ τι ἐκείνου τῷ τοιοῦτον εἶναι οἷον τὸ ἴσον" (74d6f.), "καὶ πολύ γε, ἔφη, ἐνδεῖ." (74d8), "ἐνδεῖ δὲ καὶ οὐ δύναται" (74e1), "ἀλλ᾽ ἔστιν φαυλότερον" (74e1-2), "ἐνδεεστέρως δὲ ἔχειν" (74e4), "ἔχει δὲ ἐνδεεστέρως" (75a2), "καὶ αὐτοῦ ἐνδεέστερά ἐστιν" (75b2), "ἔστιν δὲ αὐτοῦ φαυλότερα" (75b8).

[419] The intrinsically referential nature of images is at several points described using desiderative metaphors: "ὅτι βούλεται" (74d10), "ὅτι ὀρέγεται" (75a1), "ἐκείνου τε ὀρέγεται τοῦ ὃ ἔστιν ἴσον" (75b1), "ὅτι προθυμεῖται" (75b7). It is as if the image itself were the bearer of a desiderative tension towards being the thing itself, but failed to reach it or grasp it. This conception of the image as a frustrated constitutive desire to be something one is not cannot but remind us of how the human condition ἐνθάδε is described in the palinode.

[420] Ancient Greek culture seems to have been particularly sensitive to this ambiguous nature of images and shadows. Images are seductive and alluring, but they also fall short of what they promise – and what appeared as a promise of happiness reveals itself to be forever outside one's reach. It brings forth both the contact with something and its absence in an acutely vivid way. See, e.g., HOMER, *Odyssey* XI, 204ff.: "ὣς ἔφατ᾽, αὐτὰρ ἐγώ γ᾽ ἔθελον φρεσὶ μερμηρίξας / μητρὸς ἐμῆς ψυχὴν ἐλέειν κατατεθνηυίης. / τρὶς μὲν ἐφωρμήθην, ἐλέειν τέ με θυμὸς ἀνώγει, / τρὶς δέ μοι ἐκ χειρῶν σκιῇ εἴκελον ἢ καὶ ὀνείρῳ / ἔπτατ᾽.";

However, before we continue with our brief analysis of this passage of the *Phaedo,* there is a potential misunderstanding regarding the nature of images we must try to dispel. From what we have seen so far, one would perhaps be tempted to understand the relationship between image and "thing itself" as being something like the following. One would see an image and the image would remind one of the thing of which it is an image, in the same way that when I see a photo of, say, my dog, I am immediately reminded of my dog. In this case, my being acquainted with "the thing itself" is not dependent on the contact allowed by the image. I have had the pleasure of knowing my dog independently of me seeing a photo of him. The image reminds me of the dog, one would suppose, because I already know the dog, and by seeing the image I am able to compare it with the dog himself. In this case, the image is but a copy of an original I already had access to without need of the image itself. This, however, overlooks something fundamental in the very nature of the image. The image is intrinsically and constitutively evocative or referential. This is what defines the image as image. Even in those cases where I do not have access to "the thing itself" beyond the image, the image itself points out towards that of which it is an image. Having had access to "the thing itself" beyond the one given by the image is not a requirement. It is even possible for "the thing itself" not to exist beyond the image. In this case, "the thing itself" is nothing but the *terminus ad quem* of the reference of which the image is the bearer. Thus "the thing itself" may be "posited" by the image, and just by it. In fact, this applies to every image, even to those where we have access to "the thing itself" independently of the image. In short, the image, whatever it may be, regardless of the status of "the thing itself", posits "the thing itself", due to its intrinsically referential nature. This becomes particularly evident when we consider images of things that do not actually exist. An image of a dragon is as much an image as an image of my dog, regardless of the fact that my dog exists beyond its image, whereas the dragon, i.e., "the thing itself" the image refers to, does not. And yet, the image of the dragon is merely an image, since it points out towards

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AESCHYLUS, *Agamemnon* 420ff.: "ὀνειρόφαντοι δὲ πενθήμονες / πάρεισι δόξαι φέρου- / σαι χάριν ματαίαν. / μάταν γάρ, εὖτ᾽ ἂν ἐσθλά τις δοκῶν ὁρᾷ, / παραλλάξασα διὰ / χερῶν βέβακεν ὄψις οὐ μεθύστερον / πτεροῖς ὀπαδοῦσ᾽ ὕπνου κελεύθοις."; EURIPIDES, *Alcestis* 348ff.: "σοφῇ δὲ χειρὶ τεκτόνων δέμας τὸ σὸν / εἰκασθὲν ἐν λέκτροισιν ἐκταθήσεται, / ᾧ προσπεσοῦμαι καὶ περιπτύσσων χέρας / ὄνομα καλῶν σὸν τὴν φίλην ἐν ἀγκάλαις / δόξω γυναῖκα καίπερ οὐκ ἔχων ἔχειν"; IBIDEM, 1061ff.: "σὺ δ᾽, ὦ γύναι, / ἥτις ποτ᾽ εἶ σύ, ταὔτ᾽ ἔχουσ᾽ Ἀλκήστιδι / μορφῆς μέτρ᾽ ἴσθι, καὶ προσήϊξαι δέμας. / οἴμοι. κόμιζε πρὸς θεῶν ἐξ ὀμμάτων / γυναῖκα τήνδε, μή μ᾽ ἕλῃς ἠρημένον. / δοκῶ γὰρ αὐτὴν εἰσορῶν γυναῖχ᾽ ὁρᾶν / ἐμήν: θολοῖ δὲ καρδίαν, ἐκ δ᾽ ὀμμάτων / πηγαὶ κατερρώγασιν: ὦ τλήμων ἐγώ, / ὡς ἄρτι πένθους τοῦδε γεύομαι πικροῦ.". Cf. EURIPIDES, *Helena* 566ff.

something other than itself, in which the identity of the image resides. It is an image of *a dragon*, i.e., of a dragon "itself", even if there is no such thing as a dragon.

What follows the mention of images in this passage of the *Phaedo* is something that at first might seem to be a digression. After his interlocutor has recognized the existence of something like αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον, the equal itself, different from two equal objects, like stones or pieces of wood (74a9ff.), Socrates proceeds to argue that the knowledge of τὸ ἴσον is different from the experience of objects that are equal, since equal objects can and often are equal in some respects and unequal in others. On seeing equal objects, that are not the same as τὸ ἴσον, one is reminded of τὸ ἴσον: this is a moment of ἀνάμνησις, according to the description provided above. But Socrates goes even further: the notion of αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον was not acquired from experiencing objects that are equal. In other words, the notion of αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον has not been formed out of the repeated experience of its concrete instantiations. On the contrary, it serves as the condition of possibility of the experience itself of equal objects, without which one would not be able to recognise what amounts to different instantiations of τὸ ἴσον. The different instantiations of equality are understood under αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον, not the other way around. This means that somehow the knowledge of αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον must precede the experience of the instantiation, in other words, we must know what equality is before having the experience of equal things as equal.

But if we look carefully at this argument we soon realise that it is not a digression at all. In fact, what Socrates is showing us is that the connection between αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον and its instantiations is analogous to the connection between "the thing itself" and its image, or rather the other way around: the instantiations of equality lead us towards the determination of equality itself, as images are intrinsically evocative of "the thing iself". As with images, the identity of equal things as equal things does not reside in themselves, but rather in something else, the equal itself. It is not in the equal things that one is to find the equal itself. Rather, the experience of the different instantiations of equality operates an evocation or reference towards something else. This something else, αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον, appears as something different from the particular instantiations. It also appears as what allows us to identify the particular instantiations of equality as such. As we have seen before, this does not necessarily entail the existence of αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον in and of itself, somewhere else, as something that exists independently of its image. Rather, it is something that might be simply posited by the image itself. It is quite possible that αὐτὸ

τὸ ἴσον is something that is implied, assumed and presupposed by the mere occurrence of particular instances of equality as they take place in our perspective. And yet, αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον, regardless of all this, remains an integral component of any particular experience of equality.

This connection between αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον and the particular instances is therefore fundamental for the very recognition of something as basic as equality. But Socrates says something very relevant about this connection: it falls short of hitting the mark. The equal things may transport us towards the equal itself, but, as is typical of images, they are not capable of actually reaching it. In a way that is analogous to the connection between an image and "the thing itself", the instantiations of equality want to be the equal itself, but fail to do so. They start a journey that is soon interrupted. This interruption is due to the fact that there is a deficit in intelligibility regarding αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον. In spite of being in common use, in spite of playing an important and even fundamental role in our perspective, αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον is a determination that remains somewhat hidden from us. It is hidden in more ways than one. It is hidden because usually we are not alert to the role of such a thing as αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον as a fundamental part of the way we access and understand reality. What is more visible, what is set in the forefront as the instantiations themselves, is the equal things themselves, not the common determination that makes them be understood as equal. The starting point of Socrates' argument, however, is from a perspective that already recognises such a determination as playing an important role. The particular instances of equality posit such a thing as αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον, and what is the object of inquiry is how this relates with the equal things we normally experience. From this starting point, Socrates engages with a more complex and prevalent form of λήθη: the lack of intelligibility of the determination itself. As an image, the particular instantiations of αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον fail. They do not effectively lead us back, as images want to do, to "the thing itself". But what becomes clear once this failure of the image is acknowledged is that this is not caused by a circumstantial defect in the image. Rather, this is an integral part of the nature of the image as image: it points towards something, but it does not give us "the thing itself", it falls short of that. Usually we are not aware of this intrinsic failure of the image. But when it is pressed, it gives in. We realise we do not understand what "the thing itself" is, that the notion that gives the identity to those particular instantiations remains hidden, encrypted, enigmatic.

In this respect αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον is not unique, however. Rather, it is an exemplar of a whole range of determinations that share similar characteristics and play a similar role in our perspective. By this we mean those determinations that are the building blocks, so to speak, of our perspective, or, to use a more apt metaphor, the letters of the alphabet of our perspective. The actual alphabet is the result of an important discovery: that the apparently undetermined multiplicity of utterances that constitute human language is actually the result of the combination of a relatively small number of basic sounds. These sounds are the ones that are then symbolised by the letters of the alphabet. And so what is commonly experienced as a confusing multiplicity can be reduced to a set of specific, identifiable and repeatable determinations. The alphabet consists of a limited number of repeatable determinations, with which one can virtually represent the enormous multiplicity of meaningful sounds uttered in human language. What is seemingly an undetermined multiplicity of sounds and combinations of sounds can, in fact, be reduced to this set of repeatable determinations[421]. This amounts to a very significant change in perspective. What the "illiterate" perspective experiences at each time is the undifferentiated mass of language. For the "illiterate" perspective, what composed the vast multiplicity of sounds of human language remains completely hidden. The "illiterate" perspective (the one that does not know the alphabet) does not have access to

[421] This process is described by Socrates in *Philebus* 18b3ff.: "ἐπειδὴ φωνὴν ἄπειρον κατενόησεν εἴτε τις θεὸς εἴτε καὶ θεῖος ἄνθρωπος—ὡς λόγος ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ Θεῦθ τινα τοῦτον γενέσθαι λέγων, ὃς πρῶτος τὰ φωνήεντα ἐν τῷ ἀπείρῳ κατενόησεν οὐχ ἓν ὄντα ἀλλὰ πλείω, καὶ πάλιν ἕτερα φωνῆς μὲν οὔ, φθόγγου δὲ μετέχοντά τινος, ἀριθμὸν δέ τινα καὶ τούτων εἶναι, τρίτον δὲ εἶδος γραμμάτων διεστήσατο τὰ νῦν λεγόμενα ἄφωνα ἡμῖν: τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο διῄρει τά τε ἄφθογγα καὶ ἄφωνα μέχρι ἑνὸς ἑκάστου, καὶ τὰ φωνήεντα καὶ τὰ μέσα κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον, ἕως ἀριθμὸν αὐτῶν λαβὼν ἑνί τε ἑκάστῳ καὶ σύμπασι στοιχεῖον ἐπωνόμασε: καθορῶν δὲ ὡς οὐδεὶς ἡμῶν οὐδ' ἂν ἓν αὐτὸ καθ' αὑτὸ ἄνευ πάντων αὐτῶν μάθοι, τοῦτον τὸν δεσμὸν αὖ λογισάμενος ὡς ὄντα ἕνα καὶ πάντα ταῦτα ἕν πως ποιοῦντα μίαν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ὡς οὖσαν γραμματικὴν τέχνην ἐπεφθέγξατο προσειπών." This is presented as an illustration of the process by which an infinite multiplicity can be reduced to a limited number of determinations (16c3ff.), thus arriving at what Socrates describes as "μεταξὺ τοῦ ἀπείρου τε καὶ τοῦ ἑνός" (16e1). This is presented as a general method of searching, learning and teaching, i.e. as a fundamental aspect of our perspective. The analogy between the letters (στοιχεῖα) of the alphabet and the determinations that constitute our perspective is a recurring one in the *corpus Platonicum*. For example, in *Republic* III, 402a5ff., Socrates presents the acquisition of the skill of reading by learning the letters of the alphabet as an analogy for the ability to known and understand determinations such as courage, σωφροσύνη and others, as well as the ability to recognise their particular instantiations. Cf. also *Theaetetus* 201d9ff.; *Politicus* 278e1ff. See KOLLER H., Stoicheion, *Glotta* 34 (1955), 161-174; RYLE, G., Letters and Syllables in Plato, *The Philosophical Review* 69 (1960), 431-451; TREVASKIS, J. R., Classification in the "Philebus", *Phronesis* 5 (1960), 39-44; GALLOP, D., Plato and the Alphabet, *The Philosophical Review* 72 (1963), 364-376; DRUART, T. A., La notion de stoicheïon (élément) dans le Théétète de Platon, *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 66 (1968), 420-434; HIRSCH, U., Das Alphabet als Modell: « Buchstabieren der Welt » bei Demokrit und Platon, in DÖRING, K., HERZHOFF, B., WÖHRLE, G. (ed.), *Antike Naturwissenschaft und ihre Rezeption*. 6, Trier, Wissenschaftlicher Verl. Trier, 1996, 41-49; GAUDIN, C., *Platon et l'alphabet*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France-PUF, 1990; MENN, S., Collecting the letters, *Phronesis* 43 (1998), 291-305; LEBEDEV, A., Alphabet Analogy in Greek Philosophy: Heraclitus, Democritus, Plato, *Voprosy Filosofii* 6 (2014), 64-70.

what makes the language, to the different elements that compose language. The meaning language is the bearer of appears in block, and not as the result of the combination of different meaningful elements. One may be using those various elements at all times one uses language, but one is not aware of their existence as elements. But the discovery of the alphabet changes this completely: one becomes aware of what exactly language is made of, and becomes able to identify and make use of these elements consciously and explicitly. As we have seen before, namely when we analysed Socrates' first speech, this is a model that is typical of τέχνη: a seemingly chaotic and confusing reality is explained by identifying a limited number of repeatable determinations. This allows the one who is in possession of this "technical" perspective to understand these complex phenomena and have the ability to intervene decisively. But what becomes clear is that this alphabetical model does not just apply to the different τέχναι. Rather, our whole perspective is intrinsically alphabetical. By this we mean that everything that we experience is composed of a limited multiplicity of meaningful elements that are repeatedly used. In other words, the seemingly confusing multiplicity we are the witnesses of in our normal perspective can be reduced to a relatively small number of repeatable determinations – such as τὸ ἴσον, but also diachronic identity, unity, simultaneity, predication, justice or beauty, or good, or holiness, and so on[422].

What is then at stake in the passage of the *Phaedo* we have been analysing in the last few passages is the combination of these two aspects: on the one hand, the alphabetical nature of our perspective, i.e., the fact that it is composed of a limited multiplicity of meaningful repeatable determinations, on the other hand, the peculiar ontological structure of images. These two aspects have to be taken into account in order to understand the relationship between determinations such as αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον and their instantiations. This is, figuratively speaking, a connection analogous to the one between image and the thing the image is an image of. To better understand what this means, we may briefly recollect what we have already seen in the previous chapter regarding the allegory of the line. We saw that the relationship between the first and second subsections

[422] 75c10ff.: "οὐ γὰρ περὶ τοῦ ἴσου νῦν ὁ λόγος ἡμῖν μᾶλλόν τι ἢ καὶ περὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ καλοῦ καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ καὶ δικαίου καὶ ὁσίου καί, ὅπερ λέγω, περὶ ἁπάντων οἷς ἐπισφραγιζόμεθα τὸ 'αὐτὸ ὃ ἔστι' καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἐρωτήσεσιν ἐρωτῶντες καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἀποκρίσεσιν ἀποκρινόμενοι." The similarity between this alphabet of our perspective and the beings that populate the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is more than mere coincidence. In fact, the beings that reside in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος can be understood as a projection of the notions that compose this alphabet – with, however, an important condition: the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, as we have seen, only includes *positive* determinations, i.e. the ones that can be the object of a positive desiderative tension.

of the line, sc. the two subdivisions of the first section of the line, is a relationship between images and "things themselves" the images are images of. The beings of the first subsection, shadows and reflections, are images of the beings that produce the shadows and to whom the reflections belong, assigned to the second subsection. This seems to be relatively straightforward. But we also saw that Socrates carries on using the image-"thing itself" relationship as a fundamental structure of what is at stake in the allegory. And so Socrates states that the second section of the line (the third and fourth subsections) are to the first section (the first and second subsections) what the alleged "thing itself" is to the image of the first subsection (*Republic* VI, 510a8-10).

This implies that beings we would not consider to be images themselves, trees and rocks and houses and horses, and so on – in short, most beings we normally have access to – are to be understood as images that refer to "the things themselves" that belong in the second section of the line. They are not, of course, literally images – not in the way in which we would spontaneously think. It is not a matter of there being somewhere an "original" tree, or the "tree itself", of which the tree I experience at this moment is a pale and faded copy[423]. Rather, the tree I experience is composed of a multiplicity of determinations, alphabetical determinations in the sense we have been discussing. Each thing is a cluster of alphabetical determinations. These determinations – or, to be more precise, the instantiations of these determinations that are involved in the composition of the different beings we have access to – are what can be described as image-like: in our contact with them, they evoke or refer to something else, in which their identity resides. And so something such as a tree, a rock or any of the other multiple beings we seem to have immediate access to, in order to be recognised and understood, are in need of a multiplicity of notions that exceed the confines of the first section of the line. They might present themselves as "things themselves", but they are actually made of images. These beings, to use the terminology we have found in the *Phaedo*, want to be something else, but fall short of it ("ὅτι ὀρέγεται μὲν πάντα ταῦτα εἶναι οἷον τὸ ἴσον, ἔχει δὲ ἐνδεεστέρως")[424].

The particular instantiations of the determinations that compose each being are like images of the determinations themselves: they are intrinsically referential and

[423] Cf. p. 342ff., supra.
[424] *Phaedo*, 75a1.

therefore point towards the determinations, but, at the same time, they appear under the guise of something they are not – the determinations themselves. As we spontaneously, even if implicitly, make use of the alphabet, the particular instantiations send us towards the determinations themselves. But our relationship with the alphabet of our perspective is a hindered relationship, one that has to face a multiplicity of obstacles. The first obstacle is the fact that we are usually distracted from the alphabet, or, to be more precise, we are not usually aware that there is such a thing as this alphabet. The lack of awareness of the alphabetical structure of our perspective keeps us away from the multiplicity of alphabetical determinations that in fact constitute whatever we experience. More often than not, we focus on the individual instantiations. Or, to be more precise, the individual instantiations are not usually even recognised as such – rather, we are usually distracted from the fact that they are the repeated occurrence of a limited number of repeatable determinations. And so we fail to recognise that a determination such as equality, or diachronic identity, or simultaneity, and such like determinations we make use of in our perspective, are in fact *repeated* determinations, which can and are applied to a multiplicity of different beings, in different situations. In other words, the different instantiations of these determinations are not seen as the repeated occurrence of the same formal operator. Furthermore, they are as images that are not recognised as such, that are so successful in referring to "the thing itself" that their own referential nature remains hidden from us. To our distracted perspective, they *are* "the thing itself", because we tend not to be aware of the image-like nature of the beings we are usually in contact with[425].

This changes somewhat when we become aware of the alphabetical structure of our perspective – which is to say, when we realise that the beings we usually experience are clusters of alphabetical determinations. We may now be able to recognise the alphabetical determinations within the multiplicity of their instantiations. And we may now realise that each particular instantiations is intrinsically evocative of the determination itself at stake in each case, and in which the identity of the particular instantiation resides. But even then we remain somewhat "illiterate" – we may be able to recognise the letters, so to speak, but we do not actually understand what they mean. Even

[425] This does not just apply to "things" in the common sense of the word. It applies also to decisions, actions, moods, situations, vital orientations, and such like. These are also determined by alphabetical determinations, with which we have the same kind of relationship we have described. The search for the meaning of the determinations that apply to this kind of beings is the object of particular attention in the *corpus Platonicum*.

worse than that: for the most part, we are convinced that we do in fact understand their meaning. Our contact with the alphabet is one that presumes the intelligibility of the alphabet itself. In other words, it presumes that, like images to "the thing itself", the instantiations we normally deal with are actually effective in giving us access to the determinations themselves – equality, like the example of the *Phaedo*, but also simultaneity, diachronic identity, predication, the good, the beautiful, the just, and all the myriad determinations we spontaneously make constant use of and that shape our perspective. It presumes that we are simultaneously in possession of the images and that of which the images are images, that we have a grip of "the thing itself" that is at stake at each point. But the fact is our normal perspective is totally image-like, in this peculiar sense.

Figuratively speaking, images are all we have, and, as such, it is only through images that we can have some sort of contact with the things themselves. But as the images, as we have seen, fail in actually reaching the things themselves, as they are but the beginning of an interrupted journey, so our understanding of the alphabetical determinations that make up our perspective is fundamentally flawed and defective. So even when we are aware of the presence and fundamental role of the letters of the alphabet of our perspective, these turn out to be something enigmatic, still in want of deciphering.

To sum up, what we can derive from our cursory analysis of both the *Phaedo* and the *Meno* is that our perspective is, so to speak, intrinsically and globally anamnetic. Our perspective is constituted in such a way as to be the mixture of ἀλήθεια and λήθη. Even under the hegemony of λήθη, there is always a *quantum minimum* of ἀλήθεια. It is this that allows one to search for new and hitherto unknown cognitive contents. Ἀνάμνησις is the expression of this possibility – of the fact that we are always already somehow in contact with all cognitive contents, even those we do not already know. On the other hand, however, the way ἀνάμνησις does this is not without difficulties. The model at stake here is not of effective and easily successful ἀνάμνησις, but of hindered ἀνάμνησις, an ἀνάμνησις that has to overcome obstacles and achieve its goal step by step. This is an ἀνάμνησις that is in tension towards the cognitive content it wants to bring up. This, as we have seen, is analogous to the connection between image and the thing the image is an image of. This is so in more ways than one. It is not just a matter of the image being constitutively evocative, in a constitutive tension towards "the thing itself" – a tension that is analogous to the one in hindered ἀνάμνησις – but also that the image's identity

resides not within itself, but in something else. Likewise, our perspective is intrinsically extroverted, since it is constituted and shaped by a multiplicity of determinations that go beyond what is immediately grasped and recognised. These determinations are like the letters of the alphabet of our perspective. However, our contact with them is another instance in which our perspective can be considered image-like. Our contact with them falls short of what it aims to be: when our perspective is not simply distracted from the letters themselves, it reveals them as something that is hidden from us, or rather it reveals that what these images are all about is something that is hidden from us, that the letters themselves are image-like. These are moments of ἀλήθεια within λήθη, but they themselves are characterised and determined by the presence of λήθη. They do not reveal themselves clearly and intelligibly. Rather, they appear as problems to be solved, questions to be answered, lost things to be found.

5.8. Ἀνάμνησις in the palinode

In the palinode, ἀνάμνησις is the connection that is left after the fall of the soul. The fall, by interrupting the direct contact with τὰ ὄντα, dramatically inverts the balance of power in favour of λήθη. The different degrees to which λήθη affects the fallen soul have been considered when we analysed the so-called scale of βίοι. But, as we have seen before, λήθη is not the only force at play. There are also elements of ἀλήθεια remaining. These elements of ἀλήθεια cannot be the result of a direct contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, for this has been rendered impossible by the loss of wings. What remains of ἀλήθεια in the fallen state is the memory of what has been contemplated before. This memory puts the soul in a position different from a degree 0 of presentation, and this constitutes the condition of possibility of a transition to a degree closer to 1. This means that the fallen soul somehow remembers what it has seen in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. But the fallen soul does not contemplate τὰ ὄντα directly; it has rather to make do with what it can recollect from what it has seen before. Its contact with τὰ ὄντα is necessarily indirect: it is not a contemplation of it, but rather a memory of what has been seen before (no matter how dimly), ignited by the contact with something else. And this ignition is made possible by the fact that our perspective is constitutively image-like in the sense we have just now discussed. Ἀνάμνησις is not therefore something supervenient and occasional; rather, it is an inherent condition of our perspective. It is a form of μὴ μόνον

ἐκεῖνο that is constitutive to human nature. And this is so to such an extent that our whole perspective could be described as a mostly dormant ἀνάμνησις, an ἀνάμνησις that is restrained, fettered, tied up. The only reason why our perspective is not at all times ignited in this ways is because the connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is hindered and restrained by the presence of what we have called compound λήθη, the λήθη that cover λήθη and masks it as ἀλήθεια. But ἀνάμνησις is only possible because our perspective, which is fundamentally determined by the presence of λήθη, still contains within itself the Trojan horse of ἀλήθεια – the condition *sine qua non* for a radical change in the balance of power between λήθη and ἀλήθεια in favour of the latter.

This indirect access to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is, as we have seen before, fundamental for the establishment of our perspective. It is from the recollection of τὰ ὄντα that we, according to the palinode, derive the fundamental notions and concepts that shape and constitute our perspective. But the tension towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος that corresponds to ἀνάμνησις is not a necessarily successful transition from a state where λήθη predominates to a state of full ἀλήθεια. That this is so is made clear by the fact that even the βίος that is closest to τὰ ὄντα, the βίος φιλόσοφος, is still affected by a substantial degree of λήθη. As a form of access to τὰ ὄντα, ἀνάμνησις requires an even greater effort than the direct access – which, as we have seen, is never easy for the non-divine souls to begin with. It has to constantly battle against λήθη and the forces that pull towards λήθη. It has to deal with a soul that is pulled away from τὰ ὄντα, stuck in a situation that is in almost every way adverse to the contemplation of τὰ ὄντα. Ἀνάμνησις, in this context, is therefore born of a lack: the lack of a proper and clear vision of τὰ ὄντα. It is the process by which a rump of ἀλήθεια can still be present in a sea of λήθη.

By translating ἀνάμνησις as remembrance or recollection, we may be led to believe that we are dealing with something akin to a clear memory of something. From some of the examples that we found in the *Phaedo* (the lyre and the beloved, but also how Simmias reminds one of Cebes and vice-versa) one would be convinced that the type of memory at stake in all cases of ἀνάμνησις possesses that same kind of clarity and emotional impact. In the case of the lyre that reminds the lover of his beloved, it is an intense memory that occurs. By seeing an object that belongs or is related (however slightly) with the beloved, the lover reacts strongly to the thought of his beloved. But this owes a lot to the intensity of the erotic attachment and, in fairness, almost anything will remind a lover of his beloved, since one of the main characteristics of being in love is that

the object of love is, in one way or another, always present in one's mind. But one does not need to have an intense emotional attachment for ἀνάμνησις to happen: as one does not need to be in love with Simmias or Cebes to be reminded of one when seeing the other. In any case, the suggestion is that the immediate result of ἀνάμνησις in this situation will be a clear picture of the object at stake. This seems consistent with what we normally think memory and remembering is: either the maintenance of a cognitive content that would otherwise remain hidden, or the recovery of a cognitive content that seems to be gone from one's mind. In any of these senses, there is no acquisition of a new content, no new learning; there is just the keeping and storing of a certain content, which could be brought back into the forefront at occasions. From being vividly present before us, a content then hides itself from us. It can then afterwards be brought back. We admit that in some cases, when it is brought back, some of the clarity and immediacy that the content once possessed may be somewhat lost. We are familiar with the fact that remembering may sometimes be associated with forgetfulness, that some of what is remembered can be imbued partially with forgetfulness. But even in these cases whatever has survived, whatever can be recalled and recovered will be clear enough to give us the essential cognitive content that we once stored.

Ἀνάμνησις can be understood as this form of effective remembering, as a remembrance that is successful in bringing back what was once known but has been, temporarily, set aside. But it can also be understood in a different way, the way in which the ἀνάμνησις ἀφ᾽ ὁμοίων is portrayed in the *Phaedo*, and which seems to fit better into the context of the palinode. In fact, the idea that the ἀνάμνησις at stake in the palinode corresponds to effective remembering hardly agrees with the context and the situations described by Socrates[426].

One of these situations, the ἀνάμνησις that is at the heart of being in love, will be described and analysed in detail later in this chapter, as well as the other, the ἀνάμνησις that is associated with the βίος φιλόσοφος, which we have already mentioned before. In both these cases, we could hardly say that what occurs is an immediately successful remembering: neither the philosopher nor the lover immediately bring to the forefront the cognitive content that corresponds to τὰ ὄντα or, in the specific case of the lover, that particular ὄν that is τὸ κάλλος. In fact, ἔρως corresponds to an ἀνάμνησις of τὸ κάλλος.

[426] Cf. p. 520ff., above.

That is to say that, following what we have seen so far, there is some sort of contact with τὸ κάλλος, but this contact is characterised by the subsistence of λήθη. As with the connection between image and "thing itself", the emergence of ἔρως as a result of finding the ἐρώμενος as such constitutes and intrinsic evocation of τὸ κάλλος itself. But this happens without one recognising that the ἐρώμενος is an instatiation of τὸ κάλλος itself; in other words, that he is, in this regard, but the image of τὸ κάλλος. As we shall see in greater details shortly, what both ἔρως and φιλοσοφία show us is a gradual progression from a greater degree of λήθη towards a greater degree of ἀλήθεια – in other words, a form of hindered ἀνάμνησις.

By this we mean that ἀνάμνησις, in this context, is more akin to a situation where one is trying to remember something one once knew, but that one has since forgotten. The operative word in the previous sentence is "trying". One meets someone once again after many years, but one does not remember that person's name; one knows that that name is buried somewhere in the back of one's mind; one knows that is almost there in front of you; one struggles to reach it. It may be partially remembered: one might even remember that the name in question starts with that specific letter or that it rhymes with this or that word. Yet, one is left in a state intermediary between effective remembrance and complete lack of any presentation of the content at stake. There is already a dim and cloudy representation of what one is trying to remember. One does not know exactly what it is, but one is able to realise what it is not. Even if I cannot clearly see what X is, I can tell it is not Y or Z. Before being confronted with the situation that ignited the ἀνάμνησις, one was living one's life in peaceful oblivion: one had forgotten that name, but one had forgotten that that name was even there to be remembered. By being confronted with a situation that requires that knowledge, one is put in a tension towards it. One needs it; one wants to know; one knows that that was once known, but it is now lost; one tries to remember. It is a form of memory, since there is some kind of notification of the forgotten cognitive content, i.e., it is not completely covered in λήθη; but it fails to be an effective remembrance, since it is not brought to the forefront in all its clarity.

This situation is a common experience, but usually isolated to a few occasional occurrences. In the palinode, however, ἀνάμνησις represents a heightened form of contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, which, in some specific cases, such as the philosopher and the lover, becomes the dominant form of awareness. It is the main form of contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. It is, in other words, the best access we have to the truth. That

this is the best we can manage, according to the palinode, makes for a woeful perspective regarding our relationship with the truth. Ἀνάμνησις may provide us with an unsevered connection to the πεδίον τῆς ἀληθείας; it may emerge from the *quantum minimum* of ἀλήθεια that forms the basis for our own perspective, but it also leaves much room for the interference of λήθη. In fact, ἀνάμνησις seems to be what results from the twofold catastrophe described in the myth: the fall itself, that has put us away from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and the λήθη associated with it. Deprived from direct contact with τὰ ὄντα, we are forced to only have memory of it. Immersed in λήθη, the memory we have of it will have to be hindered and mostly lack in effectiveness. But ἀνάμνησις is still the lifeline that connects us to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and, as can be seen in the case of the philosopher, but also, in a different way, in the case of the lover, it can lead us back to where we once belonged.

What becomes clear also in the *Phaedrus* is that ἀνάμνησις corresponds to a form of connection with what we have called the alphabet of our perspective. This is not an effective and easy connection that puts one in an effective contact and understanding of the alphabet. Rather, it is for the most part a distracted contact, where the alphabet remains in constant use without, however, being the object of any particular concern. But the very existence of even this distracted connection is the condition of possibility of something different: the appearance of what we have usually available in our perspective as mere images of the determinations that make up reality. The focus on this image-like quality of our normal perspective shows that the decisive determinations are subtracted from us – as something we somehow to a certain extent know, but that that we cannot effectively grasp. This creates a state of tension towards the content that is subtracted. This tension is a form of interrogative tension: we are in search of the answer. Ἀνάμνησις, as it is clear from what we have already seen in the description of the βίος φιλόσοφος, rather than a positive presentation of a cognitive content, is a negative presentation of it: it presents us with its absence. We now know that something is missing, which we ignored before, and are put in its trail. In other words, ἀνάμνησις changes the mode of presentation from the indicative to the interrogative.

In the context of the palinode, this appears as a peculiar form of connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The intrinsic connection human beings have with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος – the superlative combination of all positive superlatives – is substantially dimmed ἐνθάδε. And this is so much so that this connection might to a large

extent pass unnoticed. But, as we have seen, this is an intrinsic, constitutive and irremovable connection. But this connection is for the most part dimmed – so much so that it often passes unnoticed. But there is a connection nonetheless. It is this permanent, intrinsic and irremovable connection that is the condition of possibility of a rekindling of the relationship with the superlative – a rekindling that can assume several different forms.

5.9. Kindled ἀνάμνησις: the philosopher and the ἐραστής

When we looked at the role ἀνάμνησις plays in the human perspective, we saw that that role could be considered to be twofold. At one stage, at the most basic and fundamental stage, ἀνάμνησις is a constitutive factor of the human perspective as such. By this we mean that it is through some sort of anamnetic process that our perspective can be in possession of the fundamental notions indispensable for its mere existence. Without being somehow in possession of the myriad of fundamental notions and concepts that organize and constitute our peculiar perspective, every αἴσθησις would be incomprehensible and absurd. These notions and concepts are, according to the palinode, the result of an ἀνάμνησις of τὰ ὄντα, i.e., the remnants of ἀλήθεια that have survived the fall and the overflowing of λήθη that caused and determined the *de facto* human condition. This ἀνάμνησις, however, is for the most part paralysed or fettered. It is not kindled or ignited, but remains as if dormant.

But ἀνάμνησις plays another role, which is dependent on the first. The memory of which ἀνάμνησις is a bearer is hindered and full of obscurity. Its content is far from clear and is so full of obscurity that even the fact that it is obscure is immersed in obscurity. Our perspective might be constitutively anamnetic, the bearer of a normally restrained ἀνάμνησις, but we are not normally aware of this fact, nor are we generally open even to the mere possibility that our perspective is intrinsically flawed and that our normal condition is, after all, more similar to that of an amputee than to a healthy person. We are not usually attuned to the limits of our own awareness, to the fact that we are beings that, for the most part, are immersed in λήθη. This λήθη regarding the λήθη that affects our perspective hides the phenomenon of ἀνάμνησις as such. We are not aware of ἀνάμνησις as the fundamental process that sustains our perspective: we deal with our perspective

passively, as if it were a simple gift or the mere result of the multiplicity of experiences we go through. *A fortiori*, we are not aware of the fact that what is given to us by ἀνάμνησις, the foundations of our perspective, are themselves flawed and to a certain degree immersed in λήθη. The basic ἀνάμνησις that is the *condicio sine qua non* of our perspective is itself obscure and hidden from us, even if it represents an irremovable *quantum minimum* of ἀλήθεια. In normal circumstances, however, full ἀλήθεια is taken for granted. It is not seen as a mere rump covered and overwhelmed by λήθη, but rather as the predominant force at play in our perspective. No one cares to understand by which means and through which process could ἀλήθεια be produced, since ἀλήθεια is considered to be the default situation of mankind, λήθη being relegated to very rare and mainly irrelevant moments.

It is from the presence of a *quantum minimum* of ἀλήθεια (which amounts to an umbilical cord that connects one with what the palinode calls the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος) that the λήθη that in most cases predominates over and determines our perspective can begin to be overcome. There are certain cases in which the fettered or paralysed ἀνάμνησις that constitutes our perspective can begin to be released. This kindled or unfettered ἀνάμνησις is the starting point of a gradual process that goes from the *quantum minimum* of ἀλήθεια towards a higher degree of ἀλήθεια, and from a greater and almost total hegemony of λήθη to a diminishing degree of λήθη. This transition represents a significant change in the normal balance of powers between ἀλήθεια and λήθη. The palinode provides us with two examples of this kind of ἀνάμνησις: ἔρως and φιλοσοφία. They share a set of similar characteristics: both are exceptional occurrences in a human condition normally characterised by a contented and peaceful relationship with its day-to-day perspective; they both may represent a significant disruption in one's life, changing one's vital orientation to a great degree; finally, and perhaps more importantly, they constitute an approximation to the superlative combination of all positive superlatives, and, as such, in mythical terms, a gradual return to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

The specific kind of kindled ἀνάμνησις that is φιλοσοφία, or βίος φιλόσοφος, comes to be through an acute awareness of the presence of λήθη in our perspective[427]. The compound λήθη, the λήθη that was hiding the hegemony of λήθη in our perspective

[427] 249c3ff.: "διὸ δὴ δικαίως μόνη πτεροῦται ἡ τοῦ φιλοσόφου διάνοια: πρὸς γὰρ ἐκείνοις ἀεί ἐστιν μνήμῃ κατὰ δύναμιν, πρὸς οἷσπερ θεὸς ὢν θεῖός ἐστιν. τοῖς δὲ δὴ τοιούτοις ἀνὴρ ὑπομνήμασιν ὀρθῶς χρώμενος, τελέους ἀεὶ τελετὰς τελούμενος, τέλεος ὄντως μόνος γίγνεται."

under a mask of a seemingly predominant ἀλήθεια, now becomes visible. This makes the presence of ἀλήθεια problematic. It can no longer be seen as a given, as the default setting of our perspective, but rather as the result of some process hitherto unknown. When λήθη becomes visible as the predominant force, the presence of ἀλήθεια can only provoke perplexity. The question is no longer how can one get rid of the remnants of λήθη that haunt our perspective; the question is rather how such a thing as the ἀλήθεια that constitutes our perspective is even possible. The φιλόσοφος lives his life in pursuit of ἀλήθεια. He does this because he knows that, in his present condition, he is deprived of it in a significant degree. This awareness of his condition as someone immersed in λήθη is in itself a moment of ἀλήθεια: whenever this happens, the φιλόσοφος is less affected by the compound λήθη, the λήθη concerning λήθη itself. For the philosopher, the awareness of the condition of our perspective as immersed in λήθη becomes the catalyst of another kind of ἀνάμνησις: the ἀνάμνησις that mobilizes one towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, a kindled form of ἀνάμνησις. The philosopher searches for the ἀλήθεια that was lost through the remnants of the ἀλήθεια that is still present. He then dedicates his life to the task of eliminating λήθη from his soul, a task that can only be accomplished through some sort of contact with τὰ ὄντα. In the terms of the palinode, this consists in an attempt to go back to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through ἀνάμνησις.

The vast mass of mankind is bereft of such privilege and must make do with whatever is left. They remain immersed in λήθη. Since the normal perspective remains unaware of its own condition, it is not subjected to this kind of mobilization. The λήθη regarding the normal perspective's immersion in λήθη only results in a more steadfast λήθη. It is the most important obstacle to the soul's overcoming of λήθη. Being for the most part deprived of ἀλήθεια, it does not happen that the fallen soul sees itself as such. The fact that the contraction of the degree of ἀλήθεια is itself covered in λήθη does not allow that kind of self-awareness. This is what accounts for the fact that the life of the philosopher differs so much from the life of most other human beings. These are engaged in what Socrates refers to as τὰ ἀνθρώπινα σπουδάσματα[428]. The latter are designated as ἀνθρώπινα in contrast to what a divine task would be: the search for the contact with τὰ ὄντα, which, in the economy of the palinode, is precisely what the gods themselves do. The notion of ἀνθρώπινον, in this case, does not refer to the human or non-divine winged

[428] 249d1ff.: "ἐξιστάμενος δὲ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων σπουδασμάτων καὶ πρὸς τῷ θείῳ γιγνόμενος, νουθετεῖται μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν ὡς παρακινῶν, ἐνθουσιάζων δὲ λέληθεν τοὺς πολλούς."

souls, which are themselves, to a certain degree and insofar as they are related to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, divine, but to a diminished, contracted human nature, corresponding, in mythical terms, to the wingless fragment of the previously winged soul. In other words, τὰ ἀνθρώπινα σπουδάσματα correspond to the undertakings of those human beings that, because they are affected by compound λήθη, are unaware of their situation as being immersed in λήθη. The consequence of this is that, from the point of view of the normal perspective, the philosopher will appear to be mad, as he rejects what most people considers to be the normal and reasonable undertakings any sane person would choose[429].

The philosopher sits uncomfortably in the middle of these σπουδάσματα. The dedication to such undertakings only makes sense in the context of a perspective severely restricted by λήθη, i.e., a perspective that, as we have described before, fails in recognising the superlative, fails in understanding the connection between particular objects of desire and the superlative, and especially fails to understand its own failure. For such a perspective, ignorance, stupidity, obscurity and absurdity are seen as inconvenient exceptions. For the philosopher, they are as familiar as the air he breathes or the food he eats; they make up the world that he is forced to inhabit. But they are also foul and repulsive to him, since he has had some glimpse of something completely different. The philosopher knows that ignorance, stupidity, obscurity and absurdity dominate our perspective. The normal perspective, on the contrary, is blind to this fact and, ignorant but not blissful, makes itself at home in the same repulsive place the philosopher tries to escape from[430]. And so the philosopher, aware of its own condition

[429] Cf. *Theaetetus* 174a4ff.: "ὥσπερ καὶ Θαλῆν ἀστρονομοῦντα, ὦ Θεόδωρε, καὶ ἄνω βλέποντα, πεσόντα εἰς φρέαρ, Θρᾷττά τις ἐμμελὴς καὶ χαρίεσσα θεραπαινὶς ἀποσκῶψαι λέγεται ὡς τὰ μὲν ἐν οὐρανῷ προθυμοῖτο εἰδέναι, τὰ δ᾽ ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ καὶ παρὰ πόδας λανθάνοι αὐτόν. ταὐτὸν δὲ ἀρκεῖ σκῶμμα ἐπὶ πάντας ὅσοι ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ διάγουσι. τῷ γὰρ ὄντι τὸν τοιοῦτον ὁ μὲν πλησίον καὶ ὁ γείτων λέληθεν, οὐ μόνον ὅτι πράττει, ἀλλ᾽ ὀλίγου καὶ εἰ ἄνθρωπός ἐστιν ἢ τι ἄλλο θρέμμα: τί δέ ποτ᾽ ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος καὶ τί τῇ τοιαύτῃ φύσει προσήκει διάφορον τῶν ἄλλων ποιεῖν ἢ πάσχειν, ζητεῖ τε καὶ πράγματ᾽ ἔχει διερευνώμενος."

[430] To use the mythical language of the palinode, the fallen soul's connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος becomes so weak that it can now accept earth as its home, having forgotten what its real home is. It becomes completely accustomed with and integrated into its place of exile, thereby sealing, so to speak, the whole descending movement away from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This, as we have seen, seems to be the role of the body in the whole process: it constitutes an anti-home, a sort of familiar and comfortable abode that somehow conciliates the fallen soul with its fate. Τὰ ἀνθρώπινα σπουδάσματα are a fundamental part of this sphere of familiarity. They correspond to what we could call the equivalent of σῶμα in the sphere of a severely contracted ἐπιμέλεια. They are, as it were, the "body" of ἐπιμέλεια. In other words, they constitute a vital orientation set firmly within the bounds of limitations represented by the multiplicity of factors of restriction we have already described. This is the vital orientation of what the myth describes as a contracted or mutilated soul. But as this is a contraction or mutilation that is not recognised as such, these

as someone drenched in λήθη, pursues a very different goal: to connect directly with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This does not mean, however, that the philosopher knows about the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος as such. Rather, he is compelled to search for the positive *terminus ad quem* of the anamnetic urge that now dominates him.

The other form of kindled ἀνάμνησις is ἔρως[431]. This is the case insofar as it reignites a connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and the beings that populate the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through contact with something else: the beloved. It therefore constitutes a moment of ἀλήθεια, an overcoming of the immersion in λήθη that dominates our *de facto* condition. At this stage of our analysis, it does not seem necessary to remember how odd this idea is, when compared to what we have seen in the previous speeches of the *Phaedrus* and to what can be understood as the mainstream comprehension of ἔρως in ancient Greek culture. But we should not be misled by the contrast with these unflattering understandings of this phenomenon that can be found in the palinode. The fact that the palinode is a defence of ἔρως does not mean that it is described as an unrestricted blessing. Falling in love is never described as the βασιλεία ὁδός towards absolute ἀλήθεια. It is rather described as phenomenon that tips a very unbalanced scale to the side of ἀλήθεια. Ἔρως is not the agent of spectacular revelations, the spectacular language used by Socrates throughout notwithstanding. It is rather more accurately described as the cause of a change of the correlation of forces in favour of ἀλήθεια.

Using as its starting point the condition of a mutilated and exiled soul, ἔρως provides a way of overcoming its limitations and makes the one who is affected by it confront a version of reality that is strangely different and alternative to the one normally held. The centre of the perspective of the one affected by ἔρως is radically changed: it is now the ἐρώμενος. Everything else, the totality of what exists is now seen from a perspective that is centrally focused on the ἐρώμενος. Everything but the ἐρώμενος and

σπουδάσματα are experienced as the normal way of life, as the canonical vital orientation. And so the contraction in the *de facto* situation of the soul is concomitant with an equivalent contraction in the standards by which the vital orientation is set, thereby turning a vital orientation that is very much at odds with the fundamental hunger that determines human nature into the something not only normal, but even canonical. Cf. p. 499, above.

[431] 249d4ff.: "ἔστι δὴ οὖν δεῦρο ὁ πᾶς ἥκων λόγος περὶ τῆς τετάρτης μανίας, ἣν ὅταν τὸ τῇδέ τις ὁρῶν κάλλος, τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ἀναμιμνῃσκόμενος, πτερῶταί τε καὶ ἀναπτερούμενος προθυμούμενος ἀναπτέσθαι". See also 250a1ff.: "ἀναμιμνῄσκεσθαι δὲ ἐκ τῶνδε ἐκεῖνα οὐ ῥᾴδιον ἁπάσῃ, οὔτε ὅσαι βραχέως εἶδον τότε τἀκεῖ, οὔθ' αἱ δεῦρο πεσοῦσαι ἐδυστύχησαν, ὥστε ὑπό τινων ὁμιλιῶν ἐπὶ τὸ ἄδικον τραπόμεναι λήθην ὧν τότε εἶδον ἱερῶν ἔχειν."

the relationship the ἐραστής has with him becomes secondary, and is seen according to how it relates with this newly changed centre or focus. This amounts to a glimpse of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, through the ignition of an anamnetic process that somehow returns the soul of the lover, and, in a more limited way, the soul of the beloved to a more direct contact with the superlative combination of all positive superlatives. This more direct contact is done through one of the beings that populate the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, τὸ κάλλος. In his description of this being, Socrates plays with the visible character attributed to it. From all the earthly instantiations of the ὄντα that were contemplated in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the instantiations of τὸ κάλλος are the most visible and impressive[432]. On earth, its corresponding instantiations will also be the more visible and impressive, meaning that they are the most able to return one to the original vision at the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. By seeing earthly instantiations of τὸ κάλλος, the ἐραστής may somehow be sent up again, albeit in a confused and dimmed way, to the vision of τὸ κάλλος in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The vision of τὸ κάλλος might therefore become an entry point to the superlative combination of all positive superlatives. By this we mean that τὸ κάλλος is not experienced by itself, in isolation, but is invested with the reality and desirability that belongs to the superlative, even though the access to this appears in a confused and dimmed way.

This becomes clearer when we consider how what is later recognised as an earthly instantiation of τὸ κάλλος appears at first to the ἐραστής as τὸ κάλλος itself, as the superlative. By this we mean that at first the ἐρώμενος is not recognised as simply an instantiation of that specific superlative. This a trait of the erotic phenomenon as such: it is something that happens in those extreme and overwhelming cases of deep and intense passion. For the one who is in love, the beloved is τὸ κάλλος *itself*. Seeing the ἐρώμενος is experienced as seeing τὸ κάλλος itself. That is to say that for the ἐραστής the ἐρώμενος is the very incarnation of everything that is beautiful and desirable[433]. Or perhaps that is

[432] See 250d1ff.: "περὶ δὲ κάλλους, ὥσπερ εἴπομεν, μετ᾽ ἐκείνων τε ἔλαμπεν ὄν, δεῦρό τ᾽ ἐλθόντες κατειλήφαμεν αὐτὸ διὰ τῆς ἐναργεστάτης αἰσθήσεως τῶν ἡμετέρων στίλβον ἐναργέστατα." See also 250b3ff.: "κάλλος δὲ τότ᾽ ἦν ἰδεῖν λαμπρόν, ὅτε σὺν εὐδαίμονι χορῷ μακαρίαν ὄψιν τε καὶ θέαν, ἑπόμενοι μετὰ μὲν Διὸς ἡμεῖς, ἄλλοι δὲ μετ᾽ ἄλλου θεῶν, εἶδόν τε καὶ ἐτελοῦντο τῶν τελετῶν ἣν θέμις λέγειν μακαριωτάτην".

[433] The similarity between this and the characterisation of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not a coincidence. The experience of ἔρως is such that it can be translated into the grammar of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος: as an experience of everything that is needed and desired in its superlative form, found in the person of the ἐρώμενος. In this, it deviates substantially from our everyday experience, where the contact with the superlative tends to be dimmed and unclear. On the contrary, the experience of ἔρως, albeit still imbued with confusion, brings to the forefront the superlative in a more distinct way than usual.

too moderate a phrase. One could not even say that the ἐρώμενος is beauty made flesh, because he is beauty itself, and everything else that is beautiful not only pales away in comparison, as the moon before the sun, but derives its beauty from sharing the same world with the ἐρώμενος[434]. The ἐρώμενος becomes the most important thing in the world, and everything else fades into the background. For the ἐραστής, there is nothing that can compare to the ἐρώμενος. And so, to the eyes of the ἐραστής, the ἐρώμενος is not seen as an instantiation of τὸ κάλλος itself. Rather, the ἐρώμενος is the paragon of τὸ κάλλος, the quintessence of τὸ κάλλος, and, in this sense, the ἐρώμενος is not καλός, but τὸ κάλλος itself. That is to say that, for the ἐραστής, the ἐρώμενος is not as an exemplar or specimen of τὸ κάλλος, but is the very thing that is τὸ κάλλος. The ἐρώμενος is the ἐρώμενος, τὸ κάλλος itself, and there is nothing whose presence is more keenly felt, nothing, in short, more real than the ἐρώμενος[435].

Associated with this connection between the ἐρώμενος and τὸ κάλλος is what we could designate as the "anthropological" understanding that ἔρως itself bears. By this we mean that ἔρως contains a perspective on reality and on the meaning of human life that appears as evident and beyond all doubt to the ἐραστής. For the ἐραστής the ἐρώμενος is what life is all about; he is what gives life meaning; he is the key to happiness. This is lived by the ἐραστής as something perfectly obvious, the clear and irrefutable answer to a question that had always been there waiting to be answered, but that he did not even know he had before the answer itself appeared to him, in flesh and blood. As he now realises, the ἐρώμενος is what the ἐραστής had been searching for all his life, even if he was not aware he was searching for anything in particular before he came under the influence of ἔρως. This brings a general perspective on human life: human life is understood by the ἐραστής as a quest for that specific person that contains in himself all that is beautiful and good and desirable. That before that blessed moment when the ἐραστής encountered the ἐρώμενος he might not have been aware of this supposed truth

[434] One would perhaps be tempted to dismiss this description as a succession of worn-out hyperboles with very little significance. That would be a mistake. What we are trying to understand is the perspective of the ἐραστής as an ἐραστής, i.e. as he is affected by ἔρως. And the fact is falling in love causes a very significant change in one's perspective. What may sound to our jaded and slightly cynical ears as tiresome clichés are simple attempts to describe what the ἐραστής thinks, experiences and feels in the flesh, so to speak. For someone in love his or her beloved is all this and much more. There is perhaps no image, no metaphor, no simile capable of rendering what that is.

[435] For a more thorough examination of what is at stake here, see CARVALHO, M. J., Ἔρως and Πτέρως in CARVALHO, M. J., CAEIRO, A., TELO, H. (ed.), In the Mirror of the Phaedrus, Sankt Augustin, Academia Verlag, 2013, 167-243, especially 218ff.

about human life is of little or no importance. The magical thing about ἔρως is that it provides the answer at the same time that it reveals what the most significant and meaningful question is. The ἐρώμενος appears as everything the ἐραστής has ever wanted and needed, thereby retrospectively revealing what had been missing from the ἐραστής' life so far. The revelation of this supposed truth arrives together with the recognition of the ἐρώμενος as τὸ κάλλος. For the ἐραστής, the ἐρώμενος is the solution of every problem, the satisfaction of every need, the answer to every prayer. The ἐρώμενος is the most beautiful, the most enchanting, the most appealing, the most sublime being in existence. In short, for the ἐραστής, the ἐρώμενος *is* the superlative: the *terminus ad quem* of all positive desiderative tension, that which combines in a superlative way all that one may need and desire.

But what we are told in the palinode is that the ἐρώμενος is an instantiation of τὸ κάλλος, and that is what causes the overwhelming, explosive, irresistible attraction and obsession that draws the ἐραστής towards him. In other words, what the ἐραστής desires is τὸ κάλλος, of which the ἐρώμενος is a visible, living and breathing instantiation, and the desire for the ἐρώμενος is derived from the constitutive and fundamental hunger the ἐραστής has for the superlative. In this respect, figuratively speaking, the ἐρώμενος is an image of τὸ κάλλος, with the peculiar properties we have already discussed. As an image, the sight of the ἐρώμενος is very effective: it puts the ἐραστής before τὸ κάλλος. It operates an identification of the ἐρώμενος with τὸ κάλλος – to the point that there seems to be no distinction between one and the other. At first, then, the ἐρώμενος is not recognised as an image, but rather as "the thing itself". Or, to be more precise, no distinction is recognised between one and the other, as the ἐρώμενος himself is seen as τὸ κάλλος[436]. But as we have seen regarding images in general, they have strengths and weaknesses. Through the ἐρώμενος, one is put in contact with τὸ κάλλος. But this happens because, to use the terminology we have found in the *Phaedo* (75a1), the ἐρώμενος, in the eyes of the ἐραστής, "ὀρέγεται εἶναι οἷον τὸ δεῖνα", is of such a nature that it "wants" to be τὸ κάλλος itself. And yet, whether the ἐραστής realises it or not, this image falls short ("ἔχει δὲ ἐνδεεστέρως") of that. What we are going to look into next is how it falls

[436] As we shall see next, the identification of the ἐρώμενος with τὸ κάλλος may be replaced by a different understanding of what is at stake in erotic phenomenon. However, although one may not come to realise that τὸ κάλλος and the ἐρώμενος are two distinct beings, the fact remains that what defines ἔρως is this overwhelming appearance of τὸ κάλλος itself, even if under the guise of the ἐρώμενος.

short, i.e., how the contact the ἐραστής has with τὸ κάλλος and with the superlative through the ἐρώμενος suffers from limitations and restrictions, i.e., from λήθη.

In order to understand this, however, one thing must be clear: we are dealing with a complex phenomenon, one, in fact, that admits a multiplicity of degrees. The peculiar form of contact with the superlative that is brought by ἔρως constitutes a return of sorts to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. Ἔρως, however, does not transport the ἐραστής immediately from a situation dominated by λήθη, with only a very dimmed contact with the superlative, to a situation where ἀλήθεια rules. There are intermediary stages or degrees between one extreme and the other. In this, ἔρως reflects the anamnetic structure we have previously analysed. It is akin to a form of hindered ἀνάμνησις inasmuch as it starts from a position in which there is a *quantum minimum* of ἀλήθεια, and also of contact with the superlative, and one proceeds in stages, with difficulty, towards a greater degree of ἀλήθεια. That this entails a tension towards the object of ἀνάμνησις, a greater concentration on it, a mobilisation towards it is yet another aspect in which hindered ἀνάμνησις is analogous to ἔρως[437]. To use the mythical terms, the return to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is done in stages, and it can at any given moment be interrupted, end in failure or be stopped in its tracks. What we are dealing with here is yet another scale, or, to be more precise, a new version of some of the scales we have seen so far in this study. It is a scale of proximity to and distance from the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but now going in the opposite direction. It is a scale of wings, as the wings start to regrow, which, in the economy of the myth, indicates a more direct contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.

Of the first stage or degree we have already given a few hints. In this first stage the ἐραστής is concentrated on the ἐρώμενος himself, who appears as the living incarnation of the superlative, in the peculiar way we have previously described. What one wants is the ἐρώμενος himself. This is due to confusion and obscurity (in short, to λήθη) as one is not aware of what is really happening. The catastrophic changes that are brought by ἔρως disrupt one's perspective in such a way that one can only react to that

[437] We must bear in mind that not all instances ἔρως-connected ἀνάμνησις produce the kind of ἀνάμνησις we are dealing with at this point. In a passage we have already mentioned, *Phaedo* 73d2-7, a lover sees a lyre or a cloak or some other object and is reminded of his beloved. The lyre is the object of immediate perception, but the content that is brought forth to the lover's mind is the beloved. In this anamnetic process, the lyre is just the stepping-stone towards something far more important, the content that is the true object of ἀνάμνησις. But this form of ἀνάμνησις is not the hindered ἀνάμνησις we find in the description of ἔρως in the palinode: it is rather an effective ἀνάμνησις made all the more effective by the fact that for the ἐραστής the ἐρώμενος is permanently in focus. But in this case the ἐρώμενος himself is the object of the ἀνάμνησις, not, as in the palinode's description, a stepping-stone.

overwhelming event. One does not really understand what is happening. One can only understand that, all of a sudden, that person, that being, the ἐρώμενος, becomes everything one needs and wants, everything one can think about. This is already a stronger form of contact with the superlative, as one is awaken from the contented slumber in which one was sleeping before, comfortably installed in this house of banishment. Even if one cannot see that what one hungers for is something like the superlative combination of all positive superlatives, one is already on track towards it. There is an increase in ἀλήθεια, and a decrease in λήθη, although the degree of λήθη is still high. The ἐρώμενος, however, is the *terminus ad quem* of the yearning. In a way, at this stage one is stuck in an obsessive attachment to the ἐρώμενος as such – so much so that, unlike in the subsequent stages, one cannot even recognise that what actually causes the attachment is something different from the ἐρώμενος himself, τὸ κάλλος, of which the ἐρώμενος is an instantiation.

But even at a stage in which the ἐρώμενος is the *terminus ad quem*, the obsessive attachment for the ἐρώμενος is not simple. In order to understand the complexity of what is at stake here we may once again enlist the help of Pausanias' speech in the *Symposium* (280c1ff.), and namely the set of formal criteria used to describe the two kinds of ἔρως identified by Pausanias: ἔρως πάνδημος and ἔρως οὐράνιος[438]. Of the three criteria, one, the temporal horizon at stake in each of these kinds of ἔρως, we can put aside, as it does not play a relevant role in the description of ἔρως put forward in the palinode. The other two, however, do. These are what we can designate as the object of ἔρως, and that which one wants to do with the object, in other words, what we could designate as the second object, or the aim of the desire[439]. The object at this stage is, of course, the ἐρώμενος himself. That is easy enough to identify. The complexity appears when we try to find what the second object is. This complexity regarding the second object is rooted on the complexity of the ψυχή we have already analysed in this chapter. As the human ψυχή is determined by what amounts to a system of forces, with different elements pulling in diverging directions, what the ἐραστής wants from the ἐρώμενος will be a confusion between a variety of different aims. And so, on the one hand, the ἐραστής is the bearer of

[438] See CARVALHO (2009), 565ff.

[439] By "second object" we mean that which we want the object for, what we want from it, or what we want to do with it. So, we desire food to eat, water to drink, and so on. In other words, the "second object" is that which corresponds to the fulfilment of the lack that draws one towards the primary object of desire. It is the representation of ourselves as being in possession of the desired object, doing this or that with it.

a sexual desire, as expressed by the bad horse's eagerness to reach the ἐρώμενος[440]. To use Pausanias' terms, this is a desire for the ἐρώμενος' body: an ἔρως πάνδημος. On the other hand, at the same time, and in conflict with the other yearning, one desires to spend time with the ἐρώμενος, to spend one's life with him. In Pausanias' terms, this is an attachment to the ἐρώμενος' ψυχή, to his life: an ἔρως οὐράνιος. This amounts to a radical difference in the recognition of the ἐρώμενος himself by the ἐραστής. As an object of desire, the ἐρώμενος is complex: it can be recognised in different ways according to which second object is aimed at by the desire at stake. For the bad horse, the ἐρώμενος is the bearer of the beautiful and superlatively attractive body that it desires; for the charioteer, the ἐρώμενος is something very different: what life is all about. But, whereas in Pausanias' speech these two types of ἔρως appear as something separate, as two distinct kinds affecting distinct types of people, in the *Phaedrus* they appear in one and the same person, at the same time, in the same situation. They appear mingled and confused, and what results from this strange mixture will depend on what comes out of the struggle and balance of forces that is at the heart of human nature[441].

The description of this phenomenon provided by Socrates highlights the inner conflict that arises on this occasion. The soul, which was from the start the seat of conflicting forces, becomes almost a battlefield now that it is confronted with the most desirable of earthly objects. The force that leads one away from ἀλήθεια, symbolized by the bad horse, draws one towards the beloved. The other forces, chiefly the charioteer, draw, at least at first, one away from the beloved. This seems rather contradictory, considering the general idea that ἔρως is a form of ἀλήθεια and a vehicle that leads one back to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. But, as we have seen before, the ἔρως that can ignite ἀνάμνησις is one to which the beloved acts as a *terminus a quo* and not as a *terminus ad quem*. For the bad horse, the beloved is the centre of everything. He desires the beloved

[440] 253e5ff.: "ὅταν δ' οὖν ὁ ἡνίοχος ἰδὼν τὸ ἐρωτικὸν ὄμμα, πᾶσαν αἰσθήσει διαθερμήνας τὴν ψυχήν, γαργαλισμοῦ τε καὶ πόθου κέντρων ὑποπλησθῇ, ὁ μὲν εὐπειθὴς τῷ ἡνιόχῳ τῶν ἵππων, ἀεί τε καὶ τότε αἰδοῖ βιαζόμενος, ἑαυτὸν κατέχει μὴ ἐπιπηδᾶν τῷ ἐρωμένῳ: ὁ δὲ οὔτε κέντρων ἡνιοχικῶν οὔτε μάστιγος ἔτι ἐντρέπεται, σκιρτῶν δὲ βίᾳ φέρεται, καὶ πάντα πράγματα παρέχων τῷ σύζυγί τε καὶ ἡνιόχῳ ἀναγκάζει ἰέναι τε πρὸς τὰ παιδικὰ καὶ μνείαν ποιεῖσθαι τῆς τῶν ἀφροδισίων χάριτος."

[441] In this the palinode differs substantially from the "monistic" model of Aristophanes' speech, where the sexual component is a substitute for the permanent and intrinsic union that constituted the human ἀρχαία φύσις. In Aristophanes' speech, sex is therefore not an extrinsic or added component, but it is derived from the fundamental principle that defines and determines the whole anthropological model. In the case of the palinode, however, human nature is from the very start understood as complex, as the seat of a system of heterogeneous forces. And so the hunger for the superlative, the fundamental principle of the anthropological model, is mingled with other elements, namely other forms of desire, represented by the bad horse.

himself, or, to be more precise, the pleasures that can result from being with the beloved. In this case, the beloved is never seen as the stepping-stone towards ἀλήθεια, because the bad horse has other interests besides ἀλήθεια[442].

The charioteer, however, yearns for ἀλήθεια, for τὸ κάλλος – as he yearns for every superlative in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. In the case of the ones that can love in such a way as to kindle ἀνάμνησις, the charioteer would be even more open and even more yearning, since they are not as affected by λήθη. Almost paradoxically, where the bad horse is sure of himself, the charioteer is hesitant, insecure and perplexed. The bad horse sees in the beloved the object of his newly discovered desire (254e5ff.). The charioteer does not know what he sees and does not know how to act. As usual, it is the one who is perplexed that is closer to the truth. The beloved is, in fact, an object of perplexity. He is here to disturb and, by means of its disturbing effect, to release the lover's soul from the constraints of the self-assuredness of λήθη. Falling in love can therefore be described as a process that, under certain circumstances, leads one from a state of utmost confusion and λήθη to a state of a relatively higher degree of ἀλήθεια. This, however, is not easily recognized as such. The increase in perplexity that is associated with the anamnetic process characteristic of ἔρως seems to have, at least in its first stages, the opposite effect. The degree of ἀλήθεια that is recovered through ἔρως comes at the price of losing the fictitious ἀλήθεια commonly attributed to the ones who are not affected by this state.

One of the most conspicuous effects of this disturbance is how it causes the ἐραστής to become maladjusted to everyday life. As the ἐραστής has a more intense contact with the superlative in the person of the ἐρώμενος, he is no longer able to be contented with the mediocrity of everyday life. What is normally considered to be the standard vital orientation, the actions and aims normal people engage in and strive for pales in comparison with the glimpse of the superlative seen through the ἐρώμενος. The ἐραστής wants more from life than normal life can give him, and that makes him pursue

[442] Some may never go past this stage. This would be a case of an interrupted or aborted anamnetic kindling. The reasons for this may vary, and it is perhaps this what Socrates has in mind when he mentions the figure of the uninitiated: someone who, when put into this still confused form of contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, is not capable of going past this first stage, and remains focused on the ἐρώμενος, until the overwhelming effect eventually subsides. In such a situation, it is not surprising if the second object one ends up pursuing is the one that, in the terms of the myth, is set by the bad horse. Cf. 250e1ff.: "ὁ μὲν οὖν μὴ νεοτελὴς ἢ διεφθαρμένος οὐκ ὀξέως ἐνθένδε ἐκεῖσε φέρεται πρὸς αὐτὸ τὸ κάλλος, θεώμενος αὐτοῦ τὴν τῇδε ἐπωνυμίαν, ὥστ᾽ οὐ σέβεται προσορῶν, ἀλλ᾽ ἡδονῇ παραδοὺς τετράποδος νόμον βαίνειν ἐπιχειρεῖ καὶ παιδοσπορεῖν, καὶ ὕβρει προσομιλῶν οὐ δέδοικεν οὐδ᾽ αἰσχύνεται παρὰ φύσιν ἡδονὴν διώκων".

what the mere sight of the ἐρώμενος seems to promise: the superlative. Meeting the ἐρώμενος awakens and intensifies the presence of the superlative in the life of the ἐραστής – making everything else look bleak and dull in comparison[443].

Gradually, the ἐραστής may become aware that what is at stake in this mystery is more than the ἐρώμενος himself. In other words, the ἐραστής may start to get glimpses of the fact that what makes the ἐρώμενος all that he is for the ἐραστής (the key to life, that for the sake of which everything exists) goes beyond the ἐρώμενος himself. This does not mean that the ἐρώμενος is put aside as the *terminus ad quem* of the ἐραστής' desire. Rather, at the same time that the ἐραστής is focused on the ἐρώμενος in all his marvellous desirability, the ἐραστής can see – shining through that which makes the ἐρώμενος be the epitome of the wonderful – τὸ κάλλος itself. The ἐρώμενος may now start to be recognised as an *instantiation* of τὸ κάλλος, so to speak. Or, in other terms, the ἐρώμενος begins to

[443] As pointed out above, this can lead to a stage where the ἐρώμενος is no longer simply the *terminus ad quem* of the erotic attachment, but gradually starts to become a *terminus a quo* of the rekindled connection with the superlative. This is a gradual transition. One of the effects of ἔρως is to make the ἐραστής focus obsessively on the life of the ἐρώμενος. Unlike most other people that cross paths with the ἐραστής, the ἐρώμενος is more than just a secondary character in the play of the ἐραστής' life. Rather, the ἐραστής somehow recognises in the ἐρώμενος another life, another play, so to speak, in which the ἐρώμενος is the protagonist. The ἐραστής has a glimpse of the complexity and depth of the ἐρώμενος' life – a life that is complex, deep, and superlatively interesting. But this focus on the ἐρώμενος' life does not lead to a clear vision of what that might mean. On the contrary, the more intense the interest on the ἐρώμενος' life becomes, the more the ἐραστής realises that what he has access to is but a small fragment of an enormous totality that eludes him. The ἐρώμενος therefore appears as something mysterious and enigmatic. As the miraculous apparition of everything that is beautiful and good and desirable in the world, he appears with an overwhelming clarity. But what this might be, what the life of someone who is beauty in flesh and blood, who is at the same time the wonder of wonders and a human being like the ἐραστής himself, might actually be like, that appears as an unfathomable mystery. And this is an amazement that the ἐραστής cannot shake off and ignore, because it concerns that which for him life is all about, the ἐρώμενος. In the final analysis, what the ἐραστής becomes aware of is the enigma that is at the heart of the lives of others, of any other, but which for the most part we have only a vague awareness of. Each one of us knows that others have their own lives, that they see reality from an angle different from one's own, that they have their own specific histories and circumstances, that they have needs and desires, fears and pains, dreams and aspirations, joy and sadness of their own. And we know that the lives of others are different, and yet oddly the same as our own, as we share this same condition of having to bear the burden of doing something with the time that has been given to us to live. We know this, and yet we do not really know it, as we usually have but a vague and formal awareness of this seemingly so obvious fact and of its significance. And so we lose sight of the fact that each one of us, including all other people who are the secondary actors that enter and leave the stage in which our life is being played are themselves others *like us*, the protagonists of their own lives, plays as complex, as profound and as interesting as our own. Our normal perspective tends to reduce all this to a set of secondary characters in a play of which one is the centre, subject matter and protagonist. But the arrival of ἔρως changes this. The ἐραστής becomes superlatively interested in and focused on one single, special and extraordinary individual, the ἐρώμενος. And the more he focuses on this miraculous being, the more aware he becomes of the mystery that lies therein – the same mystery that lies in all lives, but that is usually overlooked. The ἐραστής, in focusing on what the ἐρώμενος himself might be, becomes face to face with the enigma that is the life of another. This enigma is itself but an intimation of what lies beyond: the superlative. What the ἐραστής cannot grasp is more than just the ἐρώμενος – it is the superlative itself, that is seen shining through the ἐρώμενος.

be recognised as an *image* of τὸ κάλλος itself. To be more precise: the ἐραστής may begin to recognise that there is such a determination as τὸ κάλλος, and that it is in virtue of such a determination that one is drawn towards the ἐρώμενος. Thus the ἐραστής starts to see the ἐρώμενος as an incarnation of the superlative, even though this might be just a passing glimpse or a temporary intimation. This means the ἐραστής may be able to recognise there is such a thing as the superlative, and that is through the ἐρώμενος that one is put in contact with it. The perspective on the superlative, however, remains obscured: the ἐραστής still does not have a clear picture of what the superlative is, or rather, what one has is an intimation, a "formal presentation" of it, accessed through the concrete instantiation of it found in the ἐρώμενος. This contact with τὸ κάλλος through the ἐρώμενος allows a narrow but relatively effective access to the superlative. By being in a tension towards one of the superlatives, by being focused on one of the beings that, in mythical terms, populate the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, one is able to look through the keyhole, as it were, and be put in contact with the superlative combination of all positive superlatives. The ἐρώμενος, then, becomes more than the *terminus ad quem* of ἔρως. In fact, the fascination for the ἐρώμενος turns him as well into the *terminus a quo* of a tension whose *terminus ad quem* is the superlative itself, or the superlative combination of all positive superlatives. The ἐρώμενος is still desired, not by what one confusedly understands to be the ἐρώμενος himself, but for the sake of what the ἐρώμενος as ἐρώμενος intrinsically evokes: the superlative itself.

This amounts to a gradually clearer understanding of what is at stake in the experience of ἔρως. One goes further towards increasing ἀλήθεια. The balance of power that existed before, where λήθη predominated and ἀλήθεια was reduced to a *quantum minimum*, is significantly disturbed. Gradually, with difficulty, it is possible to climb back up the scale of proximity to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, as the rekindled connection with it intensifies further and further. In the myth, this rekindled connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is described in physiological terms by the regrowth of the wings of the soul (251b1ff.)[444]. The soul, because of its renewed contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through the ἀνάμνησις of τὸ κάλλος gradually recovers its wings. That is to say that the connection with the superlative becomes stronger. It all comes back in an intense

[444] This amounts to going upwards in the scale of wings, from the least degree, represented by the stumps of wings, to the possibility of recovering them in their full force and ability. As we have seen before, this represents not only a recovery of at least some of the mobility of the ψυχή, i.e. the connection with the superlative, but also to an uncovering and intensification of the need and desire for the superlative.

and shocking event: both the yearning for τὸ κάλλος and the seed of what might lead to a release from λήθη and what the myth expresses as a return to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. As such, this modality of ἔρως can be understood as a form of φιλοσοφεῖν. Better yet, it can be understood simultaneously as the result of φιλοσοφεῖν as the yearning for the truth that defines all souls, according to the palinode, and as one of the events that can ignite and make possible a philosophical project, i.e., a search for the ἀλήθεια that is now recognized as necessary but absent. And this seems to be the essence of φιλοσοφεῖν: an awareness that one's perspective is defective accompanied by an effort to overcome that deficit. But to reach this point, in short, for ἔρως to become φιλόσοφος, the identification between the ἐρώμενος and τὸ κάλλος must become weaker and weaker. The being that was the occasion for the awakening of ἔρως becomes more and more detached from that specific superlative that constitutes the entry point into the superlative combination of all positive superlatives. The ἐρώμενος, then, at the highest stages of this process, might eventually be left behind, as one gets closer and closer to the true object of one's fundamental hunger. From an ἔρως οὐράνιος the ἐραστής proceeds towards what we could call (mixing the terminology found in Pausanias speech and the palinode) a ὑπερουράνιος ἔρως: an ἔρως that loses sight of what was before its primary object, the ἐρώμενος, and becomes wholly devoted to what before was the second object – the superlative itself (sc. the superlative combination of all positive superlatives).

From what has been seen so far, one might be led to believe that the ἀνάμνησις produced by erotic μανία, if taken far enough, is at a par with the one produced by the βίος φιλόσοφος. This does not seem to be altogether unreasonable, since both lovers and philosophers are set in the same stage in the scale of proximity to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, namely, the first one just after the fall. In that case, ἔρως would not just be a way of reconnecting with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, but one that would achieve the same as the βίος φιλόσοφος, and with the same degree of difficulty. Becoming a lover would be an alternative to being a philosopher, the same process through different means. Both are extreme cases of ἀνάμνησις. By this we mean that both are forms of ἀνάμνησις that exceed the form of ἀνάμνησις that constitutes our normal perspective.

As we have seen before, ἀνάμνησις is an essential component of the human perspective, regardless of whereabouts in the scale of λήθη and ἀλήθεια it might be located. But this ἀνάμνησις is silent and usually goes unnoticed. Its effects are part of the landscape we think we are familiar with, and tend to fade into the background. These

might be the most fundamental aspects of our perspective, the very foundations of our lucidity, but they are usually invisible to us. The philosophical and erotic kinds of ἀνάμνησις, however, act in a very different way. They are dependent on the existence of the first kind of ἀνάμνησις by the simple reason that without it there would be no human perspective at all. But, when they are ignited, they disturb the normal perspective. They connect back in an intense way to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. These forms of ἀνάμνησις awaken the yearning for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος that lies dormant in most circumstances of our fallen condition.

Both erotic and philosophical ἀνάμνησις lead to a disturbance of our normal perspective, but they do so in very different ways. Erotic ἀνάμνησις needs to be triggered by a specific external event: meeting the beloved. It is the sight of the beloved that causes all the disturbances and changes that are peculiar to erotic μανία. It is the sight of the beloved that puts one face to face with an earthly instantiation of one of τὰ ὄντα. The philosophical ἀνάμνησις does not seem to require that sort of external condition. The philosopher seems to be endowed with a higher degree of ἀλήθεια, i.e., he does not seem to be affected by compound λήθη in the same way most people are. In order to be able to fall in love in such a way that might lead to a reconnection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, one has to somehow be less affected by λήθη than most people. In these terms, erotic ἀνάμνησις also requires a philosophical nature of sorts, i.e., the ability to be disturbed out of the complacent normal perspective into the pursuit of something alternative. But the philosopher does not seem to require any kind of specific external event in order to trigger this reaction. This does not mean that the philosopher is philosophical from the very beginning of his life. It rather means that he is in possession of a peculiar form of awareness that makes him susceptible to this kind of reaction from any kind of being or event whatever. He does not need something as intense as falling in love in order to start the anamnetic process, because anything will potentially remind him of what was once seen in the πεδίον τῆς ἀληθείας.

This difference in the conditions in which ἀνάμνησις is produced reflects another important difference between these two related kinds of ἀνάμνησις. This second difference concerns the scope of the ἀνάμνησις itself. Philosophical ἀνάμνησις can be triggered by any object. This is possible because philosophical ἀνάμνησις is an ἀνάμνησις of potentially every being that has been contemplated by the soul in its winged state. The

philosopher, having had a relatively good vision of τὰ ὄντα, is now able to have an anamnetic presentation of a variety of ὄντα.

With erotic ἀνάμνησις something quite different happens. It seems to be limited to one single ὄν: τὸ κάλλος. The fact that τὸ κάλλος is the most visible and impressive of the ὄντα means that it is the one least susceptible to the deleterious effects of λήθη. This applies not only to the ὄν itself, but also to its earthly instantiations[445]. The reason why the lover falls in love with the beloved is that the beloved is himself an instantiation of τὸ κάλλος. The visibility of the instantiations of τὸ κάλλος provokes an intense and immediate reaction. It is also something that seems to be more widely available than the conditions necessary for the emergence of a βίος φιλόσοφος. The visibility of the instantiations of τὸ κάλλος and the intensity of the response to it make it somewhat easier to become a lover, in this sense, than a philosopher. But what the ἀνάμνησις that is concentrated in τὸ κάλλος exceeds in intensity, it lacks in scope. The ἀνάμνησις that is triggered by the vision of the beloved is an ἀνάμνησις of τὸ κάλλος and, at least at the start, of nothing else. This privilege of τὸ κάλλος over all other ὄντα opens up a path towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος that seems more intense, albeit more limited in scope, than the one already described for the philosopher. The access of the lover to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is limited to the narrow path provided by the ἀνάμνησις of τὸ κάλλος. It is as if one is getting a glimpse of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through a keyhole, i.e., through the relatively limited angle of τὸ κάλλος. But the possibility of widening this limited access to the superlative is somewhat suggested both by the internal "logic" of the phenomenon of ἀνάμνησις, and by the mythical narrative itself. As we have seen before, often the bringing up to the focus of one content of our memory brings others with it, and as one goes through the different contents, one finds more and more. And so the kindling of what the myth describes as the memory of τὸ κάλλος may also bring, mixed and confused with it, some memories of the vision of other inhabitants of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. This confusion at the heart of the ἀνάμνησις of τὸ κάλλος suggests that what one looks for in ἔρως, the second or formal object of ἔρως, is not only τὸ κάλλος, but, in a somewhat confused way, the superlative itself. What this suggests, then, is that it is possible for erotic ἀνάμνησις to expand beyond τὸ κάλλος, although it is difficult to

[445] In fact, one could say that τὸ κάλλος adds to the shining brilliance that belongs to the beings that are said to populate the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος a double privilege. Firstly, the earthly instantiations or images of τὸ κάλλος are the most visible and evident of the instantiations of any superlative. Secondly, of all the superlatives, this is the one whose images most easily and readily put one in contact with "the thing itself".

imagine a way of doing so without turning it into a starting point of philosophical ἀνάμνησις. What the palinode hints at is the possibility that erotic mania can be, at least in some cases, the trigger to another mode of alternative thinking that some people regard as μαινόμενος: the βίος φιλόσοφος.

But there is yet another possibility, one that Socrates suggests only in passing, that we nonetheless must consider for all the significance it may carry (250d3ff.)[446]. We have seen how ἔρως, in spite of its life-changing intensity, is quite limited in scope. The approximation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος it allows occurs only through the narrow path of one single superlative, τὸ κάλλος. But the possibility Socrates mentions in th passage is of the same kind of intense and overwhelming attachment not just to τὸ κάλλος, but actually to any other of the superlatives whose instantiations can be found ἐνθάδε. And so we are invited to imagine an ἔρως-like connection with other superlatives, e.g. δικαιοσύνη or σωφροσύνη or φρόνησις, and so on. Considering the conception of ἔρως at stake in the palinode, this is not an absurd possibility, as what makes the ἐρώμενος an object of ἔρως is the fact that he is recognised as the earthly instantiation of τὸ κάλλος, as we have seen. Therefore, if what is now a privilege of τὸ κάλλος were to be shared by other superlatives, then we would experience what we could describe as an ἔρως-like tension towards those superlatives, through their earthly instantiations, or images.

But what Socrates suggests goes even further than this, for it envisages the possibility of experiencing ἔρως not simply towards one or another of the superlatives, but towards all the superlatives, each and every one of them. This is what we could call a ὑπὲρ-ἔρως, an ἔρως that goes beyond the relatively limited confines of τὸ κάλλος, and is directed towards all superlatives, triggered by all their earthly instantiations[447]. This is a total, universal, absolute ἔρως, so to speak, that is directed towards all positive determinations of reality. It surpasses the ἔρως we have been discussing so far in scope, but the suggestion is that it would surpass it also in intensity. That stands to reason, as a contact of this nature with every single superlative and all of them at once would be the closest one would be able to experience ἐνθάδε of the fundamental superlative hunger. This possibility has an etiological consequence: it suggests that human nature is more

[446] "ὄψις γὰρ ἡμῖν ὀξυτάτη τῶν διὰ τοῦ σώματος ἔρχεται αἰσθήσεων, ᾗ φρόνησις οὐχ ὁρᾶται—δεινοὺς γὰρ ἂν παρεῖχεν ἔρωτας, εἴ τι τοιοῦτον ἑαυτῆς ἐναργὲς εἴδωλον παρείχετο εἰς ὄψιν ἰόν—καὶ τἆλλα ὅσα ἐραστά: νῦν δὲ κάλλος μόνον ταύτην ἔσχε μοῖραν, ὥστ' ἐκφανέστατον εἶναι καὶ ἐρασμιώτατον."
[447] For an extensive analysis of this matter, see CARVALHO (2013), 230ff.

than "erotic", i.e. intrinsically connected with τὸ κάλλος. Rather, ἔρως is just a unilateral or partial aspect of the constitutive tension that connects human nature with the superlative.

Mutatis mutandis, this is can be read as a counterpart of the scale put forward in the end of the speech of Socrates-Diotima in the *Symposium* (210a1ff.). Here as in there, all differences notwithstanding, we are invited to consider the possibility of a sort of ἔρως that goes beyond what would normally be recognised as beauty. In spite of the differences between these two texts, they both share an important characteristic: they are radically different understandings of what is at stake in the erotic phenomenon, on the one hand, and of its relative value, on the other. In other words, they are completely at odds with the very common perspective on ἔρως, that sees it both as something directed towards a specific individual, for the sake of that individual's beautiful predicates, and as one of the strongest and most overwhelming experiences a human being can experience – as one of the pinnacles of human life. That Plato introduces a very different understanding of ἔρως is something we have already seen. But Plato in the *Phaedrus* and in this particular passage of the Symposium tells us something else in addition: that there can be something above ἔρως, an experience that is stronger, more intense, and that puts one in contact with something even greater[448].

6. The inversion of perspectives in the second part of the palinode. The non-lucid character of the normal perspective and μανία as a form of lucidity.

6.1. The change of perspective on μανία and the alteration of the meaning of the term

Accepting ἔρως as a form of μανία might seem like an odd rhetorical strategy within the sequence of epideictic challenges of the *Phaedrus*. It seems, as we have said before, an added difficulty to an already difficult challenge: to praise what is usually an

[448] And thus we come across yet another Heraclitian scheme: the common understanding of love is surpassed by the revolutionary understanding introduced by Plato, which is then surpassed by the possibility of a ὑπὲρ-ἔρως. See above, Chapter V, p. 335, n 277, p. 424ff.

object of blame. However, the association between madness and divinity emphasises a fundamental element of the perspective on madness present in the palinode: the fact that it is understood as a form of possession, κατοχή. By presenting madness as a form of possession, Socrates is looking back, not at the previous speeches – since Lysias is silent regarding the causes of the madness he is reproaching and Socrates' first speech attributes to it a very different cause – but at part of the set of perspectives on madness and lucidity that we have denominated "the implicit speech".

The association between madness and divine intervention takes us back to that ancient and influential tradition, a tradition that understood madness as the result of a divine intervention. But it also takes us back to the first part of the palinode and the model of divine intervention at stake there. In the latter, however, divine intervention is understood as beneficial. As we have seen, this corresponds to a significant deviation from the exogenous explanation of madness that we find in the ancient Greek cultural tradition. Nevertheless, the model that is at stake at the beginning of the palinode seems to be similar to the one we have looked at before: a god interferes with the normal, day to day perspective, alters it, manipulates it and makes its bearer behave in an odd way. The examples of madness given at the beginning of the palinode are of this kind. The role of the god is fundamental: without the god's direct intervention, these forms of madness would not come to be. The god is the intelligent and willing cause of the disturbance. But this disturbance comes with the benefit of imparting to the μαινόμενος or to the ones with which the μαινόμενος communicates a set of knowledge that would otherwise have remained hidden. Apart from the beneficial results of this form of possession, the possession that characterises the first three forms of beneficial madness seems to follow the traditional pattern.

But this changes significantly with the introduction of the fourth form of madness: ἔρως. The question regarding the cause of erotic μανία cannot be answered by attributing it to the intervention of any god whatever. The answer to this question becomes much more complex.

To understand this matter, one has to be reminded of the fact that, within the cosmological framework set up by Socrates in the palinode, the gods are displaced from their supreme position by the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. It is the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος that is the model, standard and cause of reality. The gods are now in an intermediary position.

They are still above the non-divine souls, but just. The difference between divine and non-divine souls is one of efficiency in performing the appointed task. This task is defined in relation to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, the *terminus ad quem* of every soul's journey.

With the place normally attributed to the gods now occupied by the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, one would perhaps expect the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος to play a somewhat similar role in the works of madness, understood as κατοχή. Yet, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not understood as an agent in the same way the gods are in the traditional model of possession. In that case, the intervention of the gods is direct: they willingly and purposefully manipulate one's perspective. They alter the normal everyday perspective and replace it with something else. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος does something different that, however, from a certain point of view, can still be understood as κατοχή.

In order to understand what this might be, we must remember that the modification of the notions of μανία and φρονεῖν in the palinode goes as far as showing the existence of two different kinds of μανία and φρονεῖν, at least, depending on the point of view adopted as canonical.

Our normal everyday perspective recognises itself and only itself as the bearer of φρονεῖν. Accordingly, any alternative perspective – and especially those perspectives that most radically deviate from the standard of the socially shared perspective – will be understood as resulting from some kind of disturbance. This disturbance affects one's point of view to the point of rendering one μαινόμενος. From the point of view of our normal, everyday perspective, the perspectives of the philosopher or the lover are instances of μανία.

As a form of intensified contact with what is now recognised as the standard of φρονεῖν, the form of madness portrayed in the second part of the palinode might be a disturbance of the normal way of seeing reality, but it is nonetheless a disturbance that – not unlike the first three forms of beneficial madness – actually puts one closer to the truth. This can be understood as such because the palinode changes the game by moving the standard of truth and reality from everyday perspective to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. To be truly φρόνιμος, a perspective has to be in contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, i.e., with the superlative combination of all positive superlatives. The consequence of this is that there is a separation of everyday perspective (a perspective whose contact with the superlative is tenuous at best) from φρονεῖν. In other words, the standard of φρονεῖν is no

longer found in the socially shared perspective – but in something very different. In the economy of the myth, this does not present that many problems when the non-divine souls are in their airborne condition, as in that situation there is only one standard: the one that corresponds to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. But the fall introduces a rival standard of reality: the one that corresponds to everyday perspective. According to Socrates, this is a degraded and defective perspective, but the circumstances of the fall are such that it becomes a rival of the perspective that is in contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. And so this defective perspective is not recognised as such, but rather assumes the guise of a truly φρόνιμος perspective. In other words, one becomes at home in the house of banishment. This is due to the interposition of λήθη, specifically what we have called compound λήθη, a λήθη that ignores itself as such and, therefore, masks itself as ἀλήθεια. The prevailing standard of reality ἐνθάδε, the perspective that we take as canonical, is the normal, everyday, socially shared perspective. This creates a tension between what is, according to the palinode, a "false" standard of reality, which is nonetheless the dominant one, and the "true" standard of reality, which is, however, in a weaker position.

As we have seen, this tension is only possible because the connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is not completely severed. In the terms of the myth, without contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, a perspective such as the one humans have cannot exist. Whatever remains of ἀλήθεια in one's perspective is due to the presence of some sort of remnant of the past vision of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The constitutive role of the contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is such that human perspective, even in its fallen state, is the result of this contact. The link between the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος and the life of the soul after the fall provides a form of ontological continuity in what would otherwise be a tale of two completely different and separate worlds. This link not only extends the reach of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος beyond the boundaries assigned to it by the myth (thereby becoming a necessary condition of the kind of awareness humans beings are bearers of), but it also provides a way of escaping the limitations imposed by the fall. It is because there is still a link with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος that the fallen human souls have at least a small possibility of being restored to their original form and condition.

This link with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is constitutive and intrinsic. It is *the* fundamental determination of human nature. Human beings are constitutively connected with the superlative combination of all positive superlatives. That is what defines them – or to be more precise, us – as human beings. Therefore, the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, or the

relationship with it, cannot be considered something external, but rather part of human nature as such. This applies, as we have seen, not only to our supposed previous situation as airborne souls, but also to our situation ἐνθάδε. Down here, we are still constitutively connected with the superlative, and we are still decisively determined by this connection. But the connection with the superlative is dimmed by the dominant presence of λήθη, a presence that, as we have seen, is itself for the most part covered in λήθη, and therefore masked as ἀλήθεια. The ways in which we may overcome the dominance of λήθη we have just analysed: these are the forms of ἀνάμνησις, erotic and philosophical, that reignite the dormant contact with the superlative.

The problem is that this constitutive aspect of human nature is not usually recognised as such. Rather, our normal everyday perspective, which trusts in its own canonical status implicitly, has no room for the acceptance of something so much at odds with its own recognition of reality. And so, for the normal everyday perspective, the ways in which the link with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος manifests itself most emphatically ἐνθάδε, the forms of ἀνάμνησις we have analysed (sc. erotic and philosophical) and which constitute approximations to the superlative, are odd, weird, bizarre, and in transgression of the standards of lucidity. In short, ἔρως and φιλοσοφία, as described in the palinode, are seen as manifestations of μανία by the normal everyday perspective. And since the "traditional" model of μανία is the one that understands it as something exogenous, occasional and for the most part deleterious, it is not surprising that ἔρως and φιλοσοφία are understood in a similar way. And so what, according to the palinode, are ways of re-establishing a strong connection with that which is an intrinsic part of human nature are understood by our normal everyday perspective as forms of disturbances of a perfectly reasonable state of affairs. Our λήθη-dominated everyday perspective, by not understanding the superlative as a constitutive element of human nature, recognises these phenomena in a distorted way. What is actually the reestablishment of an intrinsic and constitutive connection is seen as an interference of something external and alien; what is an approximation to a more lucid perspective is seen as a form of μανία.

This, however, does not affect only those who are still mostly dominated by λήθη. Even those who are in the midst of the forms of ἀνάμνησις we have explored in this study might understand what is happening to them in such terms. This has to do with the fact that these forms of ἀνάμνησις do not transport one immediately to their *terminus ad quem*. That is to say that, as we have seen before, the ἀνάμνησις at stake in the palinode is a

hindered ἀνάμνησις, not an effective one. One does not remember what one has seen in the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος in the same way one remembers the smell of the sea on a summer's day or the lines of one's favourite poem or the sound of one's mother's voice. The way one has a remembrance of the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is more akin to how one struggles to remember the name of someone one meets again after several years. But these modalities of ἀνάμνησις might be lived as forms of possession for other reasons. The need to restore contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος does not arise from soberly deliberated decision. One does not analyse one's situation calmly and coldly and then decide that one has to dedicate one's life to the pursuit of truth. One is rather haunted by the feeling that something is lacking in one's perception of reality, that there is a defect that needs to be corrected. One's mind is pulled back towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through ἀνάμνησις. Ἀνάμνησις is a rope that pulls one up, not a rope that one climbs. It is as if one's life is being taken over by some strange force coming from an unknown place, from somewhere outside, and forcing one to realise the defective nature of one's life and engage in a search for what is lacking. One is drawn into it by a need that seems to be caused by the interference of an external force. This degree of passivity, of having one's life moulded by a force that one does not control is experienced as a form of κατοχή.

In the case of the lover, this is even clearer. Falling in love does not provide a clear picture of the path before the ἐραστής. He does not know what is happening to him; he does not even know for sure how to behave in these circumstances. He is barely able to control his urges and impulses, and, in some cases, might even fail to control them altogether[449]. It is as if he has been seized by an alien force that created within him an urge he did not have before and that makes him behave in a way he would not have behave otherwise. The lover is "seized" by the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through the operations of ἀνάμνησις. The philosopher and the lover, dominated by their need to remember, to restore contact with the superlative, re-enact, in different ways, the eagerness of the winged souls when they strove to reach to ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The ὑπερουράνιος τόπος pulls them towards it and, in that way, takes possession of their lives – even though the ἐραστής may not be aware that this is what is happening to him.

[449] As we have seen, these urges can be of roughly two different natures: they might be urges associated with the connection with the superlative, or the urges that in the terms of the myth are related with the bad horse. The amazement of the ἐραστής is such that he is not able to recognise the desire associated with the intensification of the connection with the superlative as such, and mistakes them for the urges associated with what the bad horse stands for. He therefore fails to understand the situation he is in.

From what we have seen so far, one would perhaps be tempted to consider the interpretation of these phenomena as instances of κατοχή to be the result of a mistaken recognition of these forms of anamnetic connection with the superlative. This, however, would be a unilateral and distorted assessment of what is at stake here. The reality is a bit more complex. The contrast between an inside and an outside that is at the heart of the usual understanding of κατοχή is not entirely out of place in the anthropological model drawn in the second part of the palinode. In fact, we must bear in mind that the complex anthropological model put forward in this text is one in which human nature is defined by the overlaying of a multiplicity of factors and determinations. These introduce a multiplicity of variations to the connection to the superlative that defines, at the most fundamental level, human nature as such. The factors that modify and restrict this connection are also part of our nature, as they constitute a multiplicity of possible variations to the basic theme: the connection to the superlative. These factors, as we have seen, are not only constitutive elements of our place of exile, but they turn it into a dwelling, into a place we can inhabit peacefully, without being tormented with the suffering of having been banished from our true home. The result of this is the construction of a cocoon, closed off from the outside. This is what we have earlier called our house of banishment: a dwelling built by λήθη, made familiar by the contraction of our existence that corresponds to σῶμα and the restriction of ἐπιμέλεια translated into τὰ ἀνθρώπινα σπουδάσματα. In other words, the "outside region" is what is left out of the contracted and diminished existence that is the result of the overlaying of restriction factors we have analysed in this study. In this regard, the superlative combination of all positive superlatives is something "external", and the intensification of our connection to it amounts to the interference of an exogenous force.

The model of κατοχή is therefore not entirely out of place in this context. But it is a model that needs to be somewhat adapted to the radical ontological, theological and anthropological changes introduced in the second part of the palinode. And so the fact that the connection with the superlative is an intrinsic constituent of human nature even in its contracted and exiled condition, means there is at all times an umbilical cord, so to speak, linking each of us to the superlative combination of all positive superlatives. It is the umbilical cord that, as we have analysed before, allows for the change in balance of power between ἀλήθεια and λήθη, and a rekindling of the connection with the superlative. One is therefore pulled towards the superlative – but what allows for this to happen is

something internal, a remnant of the connection with the superlative that survives, albeit in a much reduced state within the "cocoon". This means that this is a sort of *internal* κατοχή, as it were. But this is also a κατοχή that, as opposed to the traditional model, is *permanent*, not occasional. Or, to be more precise, this κατοχή is a constitutive and permanent possibility of human nature – a possibility that, as we have seen regarding ἀνάμνησις, is not kindled at every moment due to the presence of λήθη. It is, in other words, a permanent κατοχή that is for the most part *paralysed* or *fettered*, that stays hidden, in a state of latency. The kindling or unfettering of this κατοχή depends on the rekindling of the anamnetic connection with the superlative. As this connection intensifies and weakens, as the balance of power between ἀλήθεια and λήθη changes back and forth, so does this peculiar form of κατοχή. It is this that gives this form of κατοχή its apparent instability. What to the normal perspective appears to be a bout of μανία is actually the increase in the intensity of the connection with the superlative.

Whenever the balance of power starts to favour ἀλήθεια in a more significant way, the contact with the superlative becomes overwhelmingly intense. It is then that this intense connection with the superlative assumes the guise of μανία and is recognised as such by our everyday perspective. It is through this kind of μανία that human beings, in their defective and mutilated state, can start the process of being restored to their proper condition. This μανία might still be a disturbance, but what it disturbs is no longer considered to be the canonical perspective, the way things should be. As such, μανία inaugurates a new way of looking at reality, not by simply revealing what was hidden, but by leading one away from a path that was paved with λήθη towards the possibility of a perspective defined by ἀλήθεια.

6.2. The paradox of lucidity under the guise of μανία

By revealing that the perspective commonly held as canonical is anything but canonical, and by identifying the standard and cause of reality with something that is to a great degree alien to that same perspective, Socrates introduced radically different notions of μανία and φρονεῖν. Under this new understanding, the perspective formerly taken as canonical is closer to being μαινόμενος than φρόνιμος. Not only is this perspective affected by λήθη in an almost overwhelming degree, but it also ignores itself as being mostly affected by λήθη. This phenomenon we have called "compound λήθη" – a

phenomenon that determines our normal everyday perspective in a decisive way. As we have seen, the hegemony of λήθη in the form of compound λήθη is a fundamental aspect of the defective nature of our normal perspective. This defective nature shows itself particularly in the intelligibility problems that plague it. We have seen that what we normally believe to be the "things themselves" are mere images, or clusters of images, to be more precise: clusters of notions and theses we are convinced we actually understand. Even though these are in constant use, even though these are the building blocks of our perspective, we tend to ignore them or take them for granted, as something that we understand clearly. We think we know them, when, in fact, we do not. What we have are images, whose identity actually reside elsewhere. But we do not have "the things themselves", even if we believe that we do. And these "things themselves" that we wrongly believe we have are actually riddles, enigmas, mysteries, fleeing from us, even when we go on chasing them.

The relationship we have with these notions and theses is covered in λήθη – and that same λήθη is also covered in λήθη. It appears masked as ἀλήθεια, as clarity of perspective, as intelligibity. In one word: it appears as lucidity, as φρονεῖν. The consequence of this is that our normal perspective is fundamentally, constitutively and globally flawed. And this is so not just because we may believe that A is B when the opposite is true. The problem with our perspective is not merely one of error – although this is also part of the problem. Rather, the most important problem is the lack of intelligibility, the fact that we deal at every moment of our lives with pseudo-understandings, with theses and notions that we take for perfectly understood and dominated, when indeed they are the opposite. In this sense, everything is wrong, mistaken, fundamentally misunderstood. This overwhelming λήθη affects our perspective through and through. What we have been dealing with is not λήθη regarding some obscure notions which we could do without. Quite the opposite: these cognitive contents are a fundamental part of our lives, a fundamental requirement for our vital orientation and for navigating through life. One does not understand what is going on, and yet one goes about as if everything was perfectly clear. As we do not really understand any of the notions and theses that make up everything that appears in our perspective, any semblance of effectiveness, of success, of functionality is mere coincidence. Or, to be more precise, our perspective appears to us as effective, successful and functional due to the deficit of acuity

that plagues it, as if looking at something that is far away – a deficit that affects the perspective's own assessment of itself.

For our everyday perspective, the possibility that there might be an alternative perspective – and that it is this alternative perspective that is canonical – is something that cannot be admitted. In these circumstances, there seems to be no room to consider that the normal perspective, the perspective already held, can be seen as not being canonical. The rule of compound λήθη works because it is absolute. Any limit to this absolute rule, any dent to its shield of apodicticity is a threat. This does not mean that simply having doubts or just contemplating the possibility of an alternative perspective will cause the perspective already held to collapse. It rather tends to resist revision. So much so that turning λήθη into ἀλήθεια requires a gradual and arduous process of questioning and revision. The way towards a perspective that can be properly considered φρόνιμος (i.e., a perspective that, according to Socrates, is defined by a direct cognitive contact with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος) has to overcome compound λήθη.

But, as we have seen in the previous section, this process is not the result of a decision. It is not something one volunteers for. The absolute rule of compound λήθη does not leave any space for that kind of adventure. One has to gain at least a small degree of freedom from its power. The two examples given by Socrates seem to show us two extreme possible ways of not being entirely under its influence. The first example, we have seen, is the philosopher. His anamnetic connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is such that he becomes more aware of his own condition as a mutilated soul immersed in λήθη. This does not mean that the philosopher is entirely free from λήθη, not even that there is no remnant of influence of the compound λήθη that usually affects all human beings. It is quite possible that, to use the terminology of *Republic* VII[450], some nuclei of ἀκίνητα resist what aspires to be a global mobilisation. But, at any rate, there is a greater degree of mobilisation in the perspective of the philosopher than in our normal everyday perspective. The philosopher's soul is anamnetically drawn back to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, in search of what is lost. This draws him away from the activities and concerns of normal human beings, makes him behave in an odd way, makes him seem ignorant of what most people in the society he is a member of consider to be important. This is a form

[450] 533b6-c3. Cf. Chapter V, pp. 363ff., above.

of knowledge that manifests itself as a form of ignorance of what is mundane. This is a form of lucidity that shows itself as a form of madness.

But this is not just the case from the point of view of all those that are still under the yoke of compound λήθη. The form of lucidity that comes with the life of the philosopher is far from what the normal perspective would imagine as lucidity. The lucidity associated with the normal perspective is characterised by presumed clarity, sobriety, self-control. The lucidity of the philosopher has the opposite characteristics: the vision of things similar to what he has seen before the fall strikes him and makes him lose control of himself. Adding to this, he will not have a clear understanding of what is happening to him (250a5ff.)[451]. In other words, the philosopher will be unable, at least at first, to understand the situation he is in, and to recognise his own perspective as one closer to φρονεῖν than the normal perspective. The one who is closer to φρονεῖν has all the appearance of being further away from it[452]. His perspective has been deprived of the self-assurance that comes with compound λήθη and has lost the standards and guidelines that come with the normal perspective. He has to search for those himself. The anamnetic connection to τὰ ὄντα does not render a precise, clear and unhindered picture of what that might be. He knows that there is something truer and more real than what he can perceive, he might even have glimpses, moments of partial understanding, but those are just little spots of light in a sea of darkness – darkness now recognised as such. The truth he is aiming at does not come to him as some sort of revelation. The gift of this kind of madness is not a precise and clear set of cognitive contents, but rather the knowledge of the decayed and mutilated condition of the soul and the intimation that there is something else to be had through ἀνάμνησις. By recognising this fact, the philosopher has no choice but to pursue this intimation.

[451] "ὀλίγαι δὴ λείπονται αἷς τὸ τῆς μνήμης ἱκανῶς πάρεστιν· αὖται δέ, ὅταν τι τῶν ἐκεῖ ὁμοίωμα ἴδωσιν, ἐκπλήττονται καὶ οὐκέτ᾽ ἐν αὑτῶν γίγνονται, ὃ δ᾽ ἔστι τὸ πάθος ἀγνοοῦσι διὰ τὸ μὴ ἱκανῶς διαισθάνεσθαι." [452] This becomes evident when it is judged from the point of view of the normal perspective, as the philosopher seems to become less competent at recognising what the normal perspective understands to be reality than one who is not going through this process of ἀνάμνησις. See *Phaedrus* 249d1ff: "ἐξιστάμενος δὲ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων σπουδασμάτων καὶ πρὸς τῷ θείῳ γιγνόμενος, νουθετεῖται μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν ὡς παρακινῶν, ἐνθουσιάζων δὲ λέληθεν τοὺς πολλούς."; *Republic* VII, 515c3ff.: "σκόπει δή, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, αὐτῶν λύσιν τε καὶ ἴασιν τῶν τε δεσμῶν καὶ τῆς ἀφροσύνης, οἵα τις ἂν εἴη, εἰ φύσει τοιάδε συμβαίνοι αὐτοῖς: ὁπότε τις λυθείη καὶ ἀναγκάζοιτο ἐξαίφνης ἀνίστασθαί τε καὶ περιάγειν τὸν αὐχένα καὶ βαδίζειν καὶ πρὸς τὸ φῶς ἀναβλέπειν, πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ποιῶν ἀλγοῖ τε καὶ διὰ τὰς μαρμαρυγὰς ἀδυνατοῖ καθορᾶν ἐκεῖνα ὧν τότε τὰς σκιὰς ἑώρα". Cf. *Theaetetus* 174a4ff.

The second example, the lover, is also put on track towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through ἀνάμνησις. This happens because of a trigger: the sight of the beloved. What results from this sight is described using a strong and vivid language that emphasises violence and loss of control. The main difference between these two cases of going back to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος through ἀνάμνησις are that, in the case of the lover, he will be sensitive, at least at first, only to beauty – and, especially, to beauty as reflected in the beloved. It is through the anamnetic connection to beauty that the whole process develops.

This constitutes a considerable limitation of the scope of the anamnetic connection, in comparison to the philosopher. The anamnetic connection will be with beauty and, apparently, with beauty alone, the most striking and visible of τὰ ὄντα. This limitation alone reveals that the lover's ability to perceive beyond what is apparent, its ability to be drawn towards the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος is much inferior to the philosopher's. But he is drawn nonetheless, albeit in a very different way. The long description of the physical symptoms of being in love and of the longing felt by the lover towards the beloved is remarkably similar to what we would understand as an addiction. The lover is addicted to the sight of the beloved. He needs to be with the ἐρώμενος, regardless of how much resistance he may put up. He has very little control over the situation. He can only manage it, to a certain point. He cannot just run away and forget; he has to deal with his addiction in as proper a manner as possible.

As with the lovers described by Lysias and Socrates in his first speech, the lover of the palinode behaves oddly, in a way that could be understood as mad. He neglects everything besides the beloved. He values the beloved above family, friends, wealth and reputation (252a). By putting the beloved above all else, the lover is adopting a radically different set of values and engaging in a behaviour that is at odds with what his community expects of him[453]. Being in love creates what is apparently a new need, the need for the beloved. That this new need is just a symptom of a need that is actually constitutive, i.e., the need for ἀλήθεια, is something that the lover himself is not aware of. He is only aware of the fact that he needs the beloved, not that what he actually loves in the beloved is just the image of what he truly yearns for.

[453] The outlandish behaviours assigned to the lover in Lysias' and Socrates' first speech are thus explicitly recalled in the palinode – with, of course, a completely different significance and valuation.

By disturbing the normal state of affairs, ἔρως starts the process that might eventually lead to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The erotic attachment of the lover towards the beloved is actually a manifestation of the soul's yearning for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος (i.e. for the superlative combination of all positive superlatives) – the same yearning that makes the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος the *terminus ad quem* of the winged soul's journey. Since this yearning is fulfilled through the intensification of the connection with the superlative, the ἔρως that is its earthly manifestation will, if not led astray, be the motor behind a strive towards changing the balance between λήθη and ἀλήθεια in favour of the latter.

These two examples of lucidity, as it is conceived in the palinode, are miles away from the conception of lucidity that can be found in the previous speeches. In fact, they differ even from the conception of lucidity implied as the opposite of the first three kinds of beneficial madness. The opposition between φρονεῖν and μανία can no longer be understood as an opposition between self-control and the lack thereof, between sobriety and unruly excitement, between clarity and confusion. The φρονεῖν of the first two speeches is cool and in control. The self-assurance, self-control and apparent clarity of the normal everyday perspective is confirmed and reinforced by the fact that it is socially endorsed. The φρονεῖν of the first part of the palinode, shares the same sobriety and sovereignty. The beneficial forms of μανία are examples of lack of control. The fact that through them mankind learns what could not be otherwise learned shows that the normal perspective lacks cognitive elements of some importance. But these are understood as mere supplements to a perspective that, overall, is effective and reliable.

The great change comes with the second part of the palinode and the analysis of erotic madness. The φρονεῖν of the second part of the palinode is passionate, confused and does not exercise complete control. It is led, rather than the leader. Because it comes in the form of ἀνάμνησις, its cognitive contents are unclear, fragmented and uncertain. But, precisely because it comes in the form of ἀνάμνησις, it has within itself a tension towards truth that puts one on the track of it. The truth it puts one on the track of will not be recognised as such by the normal everyday perspective. The behaviour and the intense emotions associated with the pursuit of that truth will make one seem mad. These behaviours and emotions are, so to speak, the birth pangs of this peculiar form of φρονεῖν, as it fights the resistance of our everyday perspective. But, by showing that the normal everyday perspective is in fact a perspective immersed in λήθη, Socrates reveals that the "mad" ἀνάμνησις may lead one towards a perspective that actually shows things as they

really are, i.e., a lucid perspective. It is lucidity that comes as madness: not only through madness or because of madness, but in *the guise of madness*. This is the madness that shatters the self-evident assumption that the normal perspective is right. It destroys the apodictical nature of this assumption and draws the soul towards the truth. What was before seen as φρονεῖν is actually a modality of μανία. And the φρονεῖν that frees one from this μανία is actually a φρονεῖν *in fieri*, i.e. a φρονεῖν that is being formed, constituted – μεταξύ regarding a fully φρόνιμος perspective and its opposite – in tension towards and on the track of the fully φρόνιμος perspective. In short, a φρονεῖν in the making – that can easily be mistaken for μανία.

What the myth of the palinode shows us is therefore that the normal understanding of μανία depends on the perspective normally understood to be φρόνιμος – the socially shared perspective – being taken for the absolute standard of φρονεῖν. In other words, the socially shared perspective understands itself *as φρονεῖν pure and simple* – and all other alternative perspectives are understood *as μανία* by the simple fact that they are not the socially shared perspective. Since the socially shared perspective is the standard of φρονεῖν, a standard whose validity is not questioned, whatever might differ significantly from it can only be seen as a defective and distorted understanding of reality. But the palinode tells us of an alternative perspective that not only is not μανία in this sense, but is actually closer to being φρόνιμος than the socially shared perspective[454]. That is to say that the socially shared perspective is revealed as not being φρόνιμος at all. In fact, as the standard of φρονεῖν is located elsewhere, the socially shared perspective is relegated to the group of all those perspectives that are considered to be μανία. In other words, the perspective that is normally identified with φρονεῖν now becomes a form of μανία. The change in the standard of φρονεῖν radically changes the value of the different perspective. Perspectives such as the lover's and the philosopher's, that would have before been considered instances of μανία, now become, if not the standard of φρονεῖν, closer to it than the socially shared perspective. This is possible because the socially shared perspective is not simple, but a composite of content and status. The socially shared

[454] The possibility of a very different form of collective madness is already suggested by Isocrates. This, however, is a form of madness whose criterion of identification is practical: it corresponds to a form of behaviour that produces the opposite effect of the one intended – instead of resulting in a benefit, it actually results in disaster. This is a kind of madness that affects whole πόλεις in the way they conduct their affairs, based on a wrong diagnosis of where their best interest lies in matters of decisive importance. In other words, the whole πόλις seems to have gone mad when it picks a course of action that leads to ruin. See ISOCRATES, *De pace* 103-110; IDEM, *Panathenaicus*, 157-159. Cf. *Alcibiades Minor*, 138c1ff.

perspective loses its status, while maintaining the same contents and mode of understanding reality. The perspective is, in this sense, the same. And yet it becomes something completely different, as its status as φρόνιμος is completely subverted.

However, the displacement of the socially shared perspective as the standard of φρονεῖν does not depend on the truth of the narrative put forward by the palinode. Even if there is no such thing as the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and even if human beings are not defined by their connection with it, in short, even if the myth of the palinode is just a tale, the aetiological description can still be accurate. The seemingly obvious attribution of the standard of φρονεῖν to our normal perspective is revealed as being entirely unfounded. From an aetiological point of view, what the palinode seems to leave us with is the destruction of the previous standard of φρονεῖν. With the socially shared perspective knocked out of its perch, the standard seems to become unattached. This causes the disruption of all our previous certainties. Our recognition of reality is shown to be all in all defective and ungrounded. What was before steady and secure, is now shifty and unbalanced; what was before clear and perfectly understood, is shown in its obscurity and unintelligibility. Regardless of how this is done, what the palinode shows us is that the normal perspective can be dethroned. In other words, we are given a formal model of the dethroning of the socially shared perspective as the canonical perspective. This shows us how there is nothing sustaining this spontaneous pretension of our normal perspective.

The discovery of the intrinsically and integrally defective nature of our perspective – a perspective that was trusted blindly and with absolute conviction, a perspective that claims for itself the exclusive possession of φρονεῖν – results in the collapse of the system of meaning that had hitherto sustained our life. With all meaning swept away, with our ability to see things as they really are shown to be a fundamental misunderstanding, one would perhaps expect nothing would survive. The consequence of this would be the realisation that φρονεῖν does not exist at all – that it is either an illusory status the socially shared perspective anoints itself with or the imaginary projection of the opposite of what the human condition really is: a desert of perplexity, where every oasis is a mirage. And yet what the palinode suggests is something very different from this existential horror. What Plato tells us is that there is an absolute standard of φρονεῖν, radically different from the normal perspective. This absolute standard is what our normal perspective wants to be – in the same way that an image "wants" to be "the thing itself" – but fails. We may not be in possession of it, we may not be able yet to uncover it, but

Plato tells us there is in fact such a thing as an absolute standard of φρονεῖν, a standard our own normal perspective continuously but unwittingly refers to. It is because there is such a thing that perspectives such as the lover's and the philosopher's can be deemed φρόνιμος in comparison with our normal perspective – as these alternative perspectives are closer to fulfilling what the socially shared perspective aspires to than the socially shared perspective itself[455]. What is then left as the socially shared perspective is dethroned is, as we have mentioned, a *φρονεῖν in fieri*, a perspective that, being an alternative to the now dislodged standard, is yet to be really φρόνιμος. It is an approximation, or better yet, it is an intimation of what a fully φρόνιμος perspective would be.

6.3. Ἀλήθεια and non-indifference

We have already mentioned the fact that both the philosopher and the lover will turn their backs to what concerns most mortals and pursue ends that most human beings would not pursue. This difference in existential orientation reflects the diagnoses at the core of each of the perspectives we have been dealing with. The normal everyday perspective looks at life as a project of acquisition and continued enjoyment of a set of goods. The identification of these goods might vary from culture to culture, from time to time, but they usually include such goods as wealth, health, good reputation, family and friends. The emphasis and importance of any of these or other goods might vary even from individual to individual. Some will value food or drink to a great degree, while others might just see it as a necessity of life. Others might spend their lives pursuing wealth, while others still might just look at wealth as a means to a different end, be it doing good to others or acquiring reputation. The variety of aims and purposes and combinations of aims and purposes, along with the reasons to choose one good above the others, seem to be as great as the variety of individual human beings. That this is, to some extent, due to individual inclination does not detract from the influence of one's culture

[455] Regardless of the actual existence of an absolute standard of φρονεῖν, the philosopher's perspective is still a more effective fulfilment of the cognitive programme the socially shared perspective is the bearer of. This is so because φιλοσοφεῖν reveals the deficient nature of one's normal perspective and intensifies the relationship with the truth – which, in normal circumstances, is lukewarm and tame. Similarly, the perspective of the ἐραστής corresponds somewhat to a more effective fulfilment of the "practical" programme of the normal perspective, as it intensifies the relationship with the object of all our yearnings and desires: the superlative (even if this aspiration is unattainable).

and society in moulding that same individual inclination. It is not surprising, for example, that in a society whose immediate survival drastically depends on warfare, bravery and the honour attached to it is greatly valued by many of its individual members.

This variety of aims, this seemingly endless multiplicity of goals are understood by Plato under the limited set of general types of tension we have already mentioned in this study, namely: φιλοκέρδεια, φιλοτιμία/φιλονικία, and φιλοσοφία[456]. Each of the desires and aims that populate our life can be understood as a modality of one of these types of tension. This means that every desire we have is actually a specific instance of what amounts to three fundamental forms of non-indifference, directed towards three fundamental goals. In other words, what Plato is telling us is that the multiplicity of desires we bear can in fact be understood as being of only three types, as they are directed towards only three types of goal. All three are intrinsic and irremovable. They are all constitutive, and regardless of how hegemonic one of them might become, a remnant of the others is always present, however reduced it may be. In other words, the tension of non-indifference that constitutes human nature is always made up of all these three types.

As they correspond to different goals, which may and often are at odds with each other, these types of tension constitute a system of forces. The outcome of the system of forces will be mainly defined by whichever of the tensions predominate. However, the irremovable presence of the other two also determine to a certain extent the outcome – by limiting, opposing and influencing the action of the predominant one. The interaction between these three general types of tension can be described, following Socrates' own example in *Republic* VI, with the image of a hydraulic system constituted by a multiplicity of channels[457]. The general tension of non-indifference is constituted by a constant and non-changing flow. What changes is where that flow is channelled: towards φιλοκέρδεια, φιλοτιμία/φιλονικία, or φιλοσοφία. Channeling it towards one will reduce the flow in the other channels, without, however, necessarily drying out the others completely.

[456] See chapter III, p. 231. We are not going to discuss the complicated problems regarding the tripartition of the soul, nor the connection with the body. Rather, we are going to concentrate on the division of the tension of non-indifference that humans beings are the bearers of.

[457] *Republic* VI, 485d6ff.: "ἀλλὰ μὴν ὅτῳ γε εἰς ἕν τι αἱ ἐπιθυμίαι σφόδρα ῥέπουσιν, ἴσμεν που ὅτι εἰς τἆλλα τούτῳ ἀσθενέστεραι, ὥσπερ ῥεῦμα ἐκεῖσε ἀπωχετευμένον. τί μήν; ὧι δὴ πρὸς τὰ μαθήματα καὶ πᾶν τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐρρυήκασιν, περὶ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς οἶμαι ἡδονὴν αὐτῆς καθ' αὑτὴν εἶεν ἄν, τὰς δὲ διὰ τοῦ σώματος ἐκλείποιεν, εἰ μὴ πεπλασμένως ἀλλ' ἀληθῶς φιλόσοφός τις εἴη."

And so, which form of tension predominates defines what kind of desire one is mostly affected by, or, to put it in a different way, what kind of aim one mostly pursues. This accounts for different forms of vital orientation, for different ways in which one navigates through life, pursuing a variety of different aims and goals in different ways. So a life dedicated mostly to the pursuit of the pleasures of food, drink, sex and other pleasures of the same sort, and of the means to attain them is a life in which φιλοκέρδεια is the dominant principle. A life in which one pursues glory, the recognition of one's superiority over others and their admiration is a life dominated by φιλοτιμία/φιλονικία. Lastly, a life dominated by the search of knowledge, trying to make clear what is obscure, to understand what remains to be understood, is a life lived under the principle of φιλοσοφία. But a life dominated by φιλοκέρδεια will also contain elements of φιλοτιμία/φιλονικία and φιλοσοφία; a life dominated by φιλοτιμία/φιλονικία will still include elements of φιλοκέρδεια and φιλοσοφία, and in a life in which φιλοσοφία predominates φιλοκέρδεια and φιλοτιμία/φιλονικία will remain present. All three will always be present, although in different ways, depending on which of the tensions predominates.

Furthermore, each of these types of tension takes the form of a thesis, of a specific understanding of the value of the multiplicity of goals one can pursue. This means that all types of tension contain a fundamental cognitive element: they claim to be the bearers of a specific perspective on reality and on life, a perspective that is assumed to be correct. That this is so regarding φιλοσοφία is clear enough: as the tension towards ἀλήθεια, φιλοσοφία deals in knowledge and understanding. But it also contains a thesis regarding its own value and role in human life: that the pursuit of knowledge is what life is all about. However, the other types of tension also contain a fundamental cognitive component. More than that: they are also the bearers of a peculiar understanding or diagnosis of what life is about. In other words, φιλοκέρδεια, for example, is more than just a blind pursuit of the pleasures of food, drink, sex and so on, as it contains and manifests itself as a specific understanding of what is most valuable in life, namely the very same goals it pursues. The pursuit of those goals is sustained by the *thesis* that that is what life is all about. By the same token, φιλοτιμία/φιλονικία contains and expresses a *thesis* that states that victory, honour and the admiration of others is what is most worthwhile in life. In other words, φιλοκέρδεια and φιλοτιμία/φιλονικία operate in the form of φιλοσοφία, so to speak: by being the bearers of a perspective that claims to understand reality as it really

is. This is the way in which φιλοσοφία is present – and in a decisive role – even when one of the other two tensions is the predominant one. This means that regardless of the concrete configuration of the set of goods that is most valued by an individual or culture, the choice depends on a diagnosis. This diagnosis answers the question regarding what is most important in life, i.e., what should one live for, what should one pursue – and these answers depend on a general diagnosis regarding the constitution of reality, of our place in it, and so on.

This is one of the fundamental questions of human existence, a question whose answer will shape one's life. That this question may not be (and often is not) explicitly articulated does not detract from its importance. Every single human being is embarked on this journey that is life. Coming to being, as far as we know, is not a voluntary decision. One does not choose to be born, nor does one choose to be born into an existence with this particular configuration. It is something that happens to us, not something that we have done. However, in spite of the passivity of the bare fact that one lives, life is not a completely passive phenomenon. Life is, at the same time, something that happens to us, but it is also the field in which we act, susceptible, to some degree, of being influenced and moulded by our actions and omissions. It was not our choice to be put in this boat, but now that we are in it, it is our job to steer it. Our action is clearly not the only factor at stake, but it is of fundamental importance. Whether one rows vigorously against the current or lets the boat go in whichever direction the current might take it, or even if one just jumps out of it, is all a matter of choice. One cannot abstain. It does not matter if one actually asks what is most important in life. The answer manifests itself through choice and action.

And yet, navigating one’s life is a task that calls for a substantial degree of cognitive ability, in a context defined by a complex combination of factors and requirements. This navigation requires the identification and assessment of the multiplicity of goals and aims one might possibly pursue. This in turn requires not only a judgement regarding how desirable they might be or not, but also an assessment of their attainability, or, to put it bluntly, if they are worth the effort. The simple fact that these aims and goals are multiple raises the question of their compatibility. And so one needs to be able to assess how compatible they are with each other, and to what degree – and if there is any need to renounce some to pursue others, and which ones, and so on. To all of this one needs to add the ability to find out the means to actually attain the goals that have

been chosen, deal with the undetermined multiplicity of unforeseen circumstances that might be thrown our way, and avoid all the dangers that might lead to shipwreck. These are all elements of indeterminacy one encounters in life, and that require, in one way or another, to be established. If this were not enough, all these cognitive requirements have to take place within a perspective that is the bearer of a global understanding regarding reality in general, and one's condition and situation in particular. All of this adds to a complex network of cognitive requirements, without which a successful navigation can only be the product of blind chance.

But the matter becomes even more complicated once we remember that human beings exist in a fundamental relationship with the superlative. By this we mean that the attachment we feel towards our own dear selves is such that we desire nothing less than the best of the best, all of it, for how long as possible. Even if we have to take into account the unfortunate limitations imposed on us by our own constitution and the circumstances in which we are forced to live, we want the superlative, as far as that is possible – and if more is possible, than that is what we will want. This only makes getting it right even more important and urgent. Any mistake, any wrong course, hesitation or false start detracts from what we yearn for: the best of the best. And so the cognitive ability to understand one's situation, choose the right course and steer in the right direction becomes more and more important. For this we would perhaps need substantial preparation. We would need to learn how to live, acquiring the basic knowledge and skills for this navigation. But the daunting nature of the enormous task that is living is aggravated by the fact that this is a job for which one does not have any previous training. One learns how to live by and while living. One has to navigate through life without compass or satnav, using only whatever kind of navigational skills one might be able to acquire while navigating. We are thrown into life without knowing anything about it, and we must, so to speak, learn on the job. Nor can we suspend life, take a break or go on sabbatical leave to prepare ourselves for whatever challenges we might have to face. Ready or not, life forces us to carry on at every moment, to choose and act in whatever way we can. As there is no time for proper preparation, one is forced to make cognitive decisions – to establish or assume theses without having set their proper foundation, or even without fully understanding them. This carries the enormous risk of being wrong, fundamentally mistaken, or of completely misunderstanding everything. Nonetheless, it is what we need to do.

The socially shared perspective fulfils this role. This perspective provides a general diagnosis of one's existential situation, but it also shows what goods one should strive for and how to strive for them. It provides an immediate and self-evident answer to a fundamental question. And the fact that this answer is immediate and self-evident makes asking the question a futile and useless action. However, by showing that the normal everyday perspective is immersed in λήθη, Socrates strikes a substantial blow to its very core. The existential diagnosis provided by the normal perspective depends on knowledge. It depends on the ability to recognise one's existential situation and choose ends and means. Pursuing, e.g., honour is a reasonable endeavour because the thesis "honour is something worthwhile" is thought to be true. It all comes down to the ability of the normal everyday perspective in showing reality as it really is. By arguing that that perspective does not show reality as it really is, Socrates is stating that the ends endorsed by it, i.e. the way of life that it proposes, might be completely misguided. What appeared to be its greatest strength, to wit, its immediacy and self-evident nature, is used against it. In Socrates' version of reality, the existential diagnosis at the heart of the normal everyday perspective is immediate and self-evident not because it is true and easily understood, but rather because it is limited in its ability to understand its own status as immersed in λήθη. From the point of view of someone so immersed in λήθη that he is unable to recognise himself as such, the experience of that degree of λήθη is undistinguishable from the experience of ἀλήθεια. Λήθη will be seen as ἀλήθεια and replace it. There will be very little room available for true ἀλήθεια. The self-evidence of the diagnosis is the result of the lack of awareness of one's situation as hostages of compound λήθη.

In contrast, the perspective introduced by Socrates brings a different diagnosis, and, consequently, a different existential orientation. As we have seen, in the second part of the palinode human nature is understood as being defined by a fundamental hunger for the superlative combination of all positive superlatives. Among these superlatives are included what we have designated as the ontological and cognitive ideals. In other words, one of the objects of superlative hunger or yearning is the perfect knowledge, the complete absence of any limitation to our cognitive abilities, i.e. ἀλήθεια. In this sense, human nature is defined, among other things, by its superlative φιλοσοφεῖν. But the fundamental hunger for the superlative in general, and for ἀλήθεια in particular, is not the only constituent element of human nature. Rather, this element has to coexist with others, represented by the bad horse, which limit and hinder the relationship with the superlative.

Our *de facto* condition is understood as the result of the interplay between the connection with the superlative and a multiplicity of factors of limitation of this connection. In most cases, the outcome of this interplay is a substantial weakening of the connection with the superlative, with a corresponding predominance of the factors of limitation. This causes our *de facto* condition to be marked by a weakening of the hunger for the superlative. This allows the set of tensions represented by the bad horse to gain the upper hand. The effect of λήθη is, in most cases, to deviate the soul from the *terminus ad quem* of its yearning. Λήθη does not turn the soul into a being without yearnings and desires, nor does it deprive the soul of desires related to the superlative. The perspective that results from the prevalence of λήθη produces a diagnosis regarding what one should strive for; it creates ends and projects objects for the desiderative component. In other words, it allows the appearance of substitutes of the superlative. That knowledge is not usually counted among these objects is the victory of λήθη over ἀλήθεια. This victory, however, is achieved not by eliminating the philosophical yearning – which is, according to the palinode, constitutive – but rather by establishing that the object of philosophical yearning, truth, has already been achieved and acquired. In short, truth is taken for granted and that is why it rarely is the object of desire. All the importance attached to the other human endeavours are ultimately dependent on knowledge and on the truth of the theses that compose the normal everyday perspective.

Destroying the conviction that this perspective is the bearer of φρονεῖν reduces the attachment to the other objects of yearning substantially. Once the veil of λήθη starts to be lifted, human beings are led towards the pursuit of knowledge. But the current condition of the human souls is such that it does not allow the fulfilment of this yearning. Human beings are prisoners of their earthly existence. They are restrained by a multiplicity of factors that limit their ability to follow the yearning for knowledge completely through, or, at least, as fully as was possible to the winged souls. The case of ἔρως is paradigmatic. The intensity of the erotic attachment is but the reflection of the yearning for one of τὰ ὄντα. What the lover actually desires – even he does not know it himself – is to be reunited with τὰ ὄντα. Ἔρως is a degraded version of the yearning of the winged souls for the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος. The fact that the lover misinterprets his own desires, that he, at least initially, takes the beloved as the true and final object of his yearning is the result of being immersed in λήθη. The odd behaviour of the lover when confronted with this desire is the result of the shock felt by seeing an image of one of the

objects of that superlative yearning and of conflict of this with its degraded *de facto* condition. But ἔρως serves as the catalyst of a process that, if everything goes well, may lead to the reestablishment of the predominance of ἀλήθεια, to the overcoming of λήθη. It is, in this sense, a philosophical project, albeit one that, at least initially, ignores its own philosophical nature.

The life of the lover shares with the life of the philosopher the fact that they constitute a radical change in existential orientation and that this change is, in both these cases, caused by the reigniting of the anamnetic connection with the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος – the superlative combination of all positive superlatives. From the point of view of the normal perspective, a life dedicated to the pursuit of a knowledge that is not instrumental, i.e., used to achieve ends that are not themselves knowledge, is a mad endeavour. But, from the point of view that recognises the normal perspective as immersed in and dominated by λήθη, the suppression of this λήθη and its replacement with ἀλήθεια is a sign and manifestation of φρονεῖν.

7. Final Remarks

7.1. The superlative as a constitutive mirage

Since the understanding of human nature present in the palinode leans so heavily on the connection with the superlative, it would perhaps not be unreasonable to suppose that, without the superlative, it all comes stumbling down. In other words, one might argue that, if there is no such thing as "the superlative" or anything of the sort, then the perspective on human nature found in the palinode cannot have any kind of validity. If by "the superlative" we understand something like a *literal* ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, such as it is *literally* described in the palinode, then this argument has no merit whatsoever. We have already seen how we can easily distinguish between aetiological narrative and aetiological description, and how one does not need to posit the literal truth of what is stated in the myth in order to extract meaning and an accurate description of reality and human nature. We can simply read the myth as an "*as if*", so to speak. That is to say:

reality and human nature are such that it is as if there is such a thing as the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος, and so on[458].

There is, however, another way of interpreting what "the superlative" might mean in this context – a way that will entail a much more serious challenge to the validity of this particular understanding of human nature. One might read, as we do, "the superlative" as standing for the *terminus ad quem* (or *termini ad quos*) of the multiplicity of human needs, desires and aspirations in its *maximum* and *unsurpassable* fulfilment. Thus, a place such as the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος will stand for this superlative fulfilment, without, however, having to exist as a real place. Yet it is possible that, even in this "demythologized" version, there is no such thing as the superlative. By this we mean that, unlike what the palinode explicitly states, it may be possible for the superlative fulfilment of these needs, desires and aspirations to be nothing but an impossible dream, an illusion. In other words, the superlative might be nothing but a mirage: a destination that appears far away in the horizon, towards which we endeavour endlessly without ever attaining it – because there is nothing to attain. Thus not only would the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος be a non-existent place, in the literal sense of the word, but also, and more seriously, it would be a metaphor standing for nothing – as a symbol of a non-existent or imaginary thing. And this is what we mean by the possibility of there being no such thing as "the superlative": it may well be a destination that cannot be reached, not merely because it is beyond our strength to reach it, but because it does not exist at all, except as an illusion, a fata morgana, a mirage.

This being so, it is perhaps to be forgiven if one feels tempted to dismiss all that we have extracted from the palinode regarding human nature as depending too much on what might be simply a mirage. If the superlative is nothing but an illusion, then it would stand to reason that an understanding of human nature where this is defined in a crucial way by its connection with something that does not really exist cannot have any merit whatsoever. And yet, the aetiological description of human nature we have extracted from the palinode survives even that. In the final analysis, it does not depend at all on the existence of anything like the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος in the literal sense of the word, nor even on the existence of "the superlative" in the sense we have just discussed. For the aetiological description of the palinode to be an apt description of our nature there is no

[458] See p. 389, above.

need for the superlative to be an attainable or real goal – it can be entirely imaginary, an illusion, a mere projection of our wants, needs and aspirations, and still be an effective, nay, even a *decisive* or *the decisive* factor in human nature. Regardless of the attainability of the superlative, this is the stuff we are made on: a hunger for the superlative, for all that is good, for all that fulfils all our desires, wants and needs unsurpassably. This is also the case from a cognitive point of view: it might so happen that our nature is determined by a cognitive ideal that our perspective cannot in any way fulfil. The superlative can be entirely imaginary, a mere mirage for it to influence our nature and condition decisively. It needs only to be projected or posited for it to function *as if* it existed. That is to say that it might so happen that we are fundamentally moulded and determined by a yearning for something that is altogether impossible to fulfil.

What becomes clear, then, is that human nature, defined as it is by its relationship, by its hunger for the superlative, remains the same even if said superlative does not exist at all. Human nature is a hunger for everything that is unsurpassably good – this is what each and every one of us need and desire, and what we, in one way or another (with all the limitations and distractions that arise from the fact that there are also other factors at stake) strive for as far as possible. The circumstance that this lofty goal may seldom, if ever, be reached does not detract from its decisive influence on the human condition. One still strives for it, in spite of the difficulties – and one would still be guided by it, even if reaching is beyond one's ability. The possibility that it *may never be reached* because it does not exist at all does not alter at all a constitution that has an intrinsic vocation for the superlative. It is perfectly possible that there is no such thing as the superlative – and yet this does not mean that the aetiological description we have found in the palinode is not an exact description of human nature.

The possibility that the superlative does not exist may not detract from the validity of the aetiological description found in the palinode, but it certainly changes the significance of this vocation for the superlative. The strong suggestion in the palinode that there is such a thing as the superlative, and that it may somehow be attainable gives a somewhat positive meaning to all the trial and tribulations one goes through in life. The possibility that that may not be so, that the superlative is simply a mirage, operates a radical change to this. As we yearn for something that is not and cannot be in any way whatsoever, as we are fundamentally determined and defined by this yearning for something whose apparent existence is the product of a fundamental misunderstanding,

we end up consuming our lives in a fruitless, deluded and empty pursuit of nothing. If this is the case, the path we are in is a path that leads nowhere. This becomes all the more serious when we realise that the aetiological description of human nature found in the palinode has already shown our existence ἐνθάδε, our *de facto* condition, to be deprived of a meaning of its own. All the meaning that it may have derives from the fact that it refers to a different "place", that it is fundamentally and intrinsically directed towards something that is beyond and above, so to speak. In other words, the human condition is such that it is intrinsically "extravagant", that it cannot be contained within itself. In short, it cannot live within its means for the simple fact that within the beggarly means it has at his disposal, no life would be possible. For an existence with these characteristics, the possibility that there this "somewhere else", this other "place" to which it intrinsically refers, does not exist at all deprives it of all sense, significance and meaning. In and of itself, this existence is empty – deprived of any possibility of attaining meaning, it becomes nothing.

The consequence of this is that what is presented in the palinode as a blessing – actually, as one of the greatest blessings – becomes something completely different. To be constituted in such a way, to be made by one's own nature to yearn and strive for a mirage is a curse. And this is a curse one cannot escape from, as it is constitutive, as it is a fundamental part of what we are. If there is no such thing as the superlative, we are reduced to being those who strive for the impossible – determined by what amounts to a delusion of grandeur. This amounts to the presence of an infinite and intrinsic disproportion between what we live for and what can be achieved. Our life becomes an inevitable failure – a failure that is not circumstantial or in any way avoidable, but rather a failure that arises from our very own nature. We are the beings that are set up to fail at that which gives meaning to our lives – because what gives meaning to our lives is a non-existent thing under the guise of the unsurpassable. Our life then becomes a desert without an oasis – but a desert that is not normally recognised as such, and which we attempt to cross in search of a land of delights that is nothing but an impossible dream. If the desert ever comes to be recognised as such, what comes to the forefront is the existence of what we could designate as a "transcendental frustration" – a constitutive and all-encompassing incapability of fulfilling that which gives life its meaning, without, however, cancelling out the yearning for it.

The possibility of there being no such thing as the superlative results in a substantial disruption to the model of φρονεῖν found in the palinode. As the connection with the superlative constitutes, according to the palinode, the true standard of φρονεῖν, the non-existence of the superlative carries very serious consequences. Since the aetiological description stands even if there is no such thing as the superlative, this means that there is no standard of φρονεῖν at all. The socially shared perspective remains what the palinode shows us: a perspective that unduly claims to be φρόνιμος (actually, the very standard of φρονεῖν), when, in fact, it is just another form of μανία. The forms of μανία that would, according to the palinode, put us closer to φρονεῖν – the μανία of the philosopher and the μανία of the lover – do so by intensifying the connection with the superlative. If the superlative is nothing more than a mirage or an illusion, what these forms of μανία put us on track of will be just a mirage or an illusion. Therefore, what appears in the palinode as a way out of the house of banishment, as a path that may lead one away from the limitations of ἐνθάδε, actually turns out to be a road to nowhere. If this is the case, φρονεῖν itself will turn out to be nothing but an illusion: a status normally assigned to a specific perspective, but that does not correspond to anything at all. All will be μανία and nothing but μανία, with no alternative, no escape, no respite. The choice will never be, as the palinode states, between a perspective that claims to be φρόνιμος, but is actually a form of μανία, and a perspective that seems to be a form of μανία, but is after all closer to the standard of φρονεῖν. Rather, the choice is only between different forms of μανία. If there is no such thing as the superlative, one is doomed to be μαινόμενος. One is doomed to be stuck in one or another modality of μανία – either distracted from the superlative by a multiplicity of meaningless pursuits, or striving to reach a superlative that is nothing but a mirage. If this is the case, then one could even go as far as to say that what the perspectives praised by the palinode do, i.e., revealing the deficits and limitations of our normal perspective, is the worst thing that could be done. It replaces a perspective that, for all its flaws, at least has the appearance of being functional, with perspectives that are disruptive, incomplete and unstable. As these perspectives cannot be considered yet φρόνιμοι, nor could they ever be if there is no such thing as the superlative, then this would be a matter of replacing one form of μανία with another *worse* form of μανία. One would be released from the prison that is the house of banishment just to be thrown into the desert.

What the palinode clearly suggests, however, is that the superlative is more than just a mirage. Taken at its face-value, it tells us that there is such a thing as the superlative, and that not only it is the most decisive element in determining human nature, but also that pursuing it is, in one way or another, a viable path to thread. But the simple fact that we can contemplate the possibility that the superlative the palinode is all about may not exist at all, that what the palinode presents as the standard of φρονεῖν may be nothing but an illusion – and that the contemplation of this possibility leaves the aetiological description of human nature for the most part unchanged – is enough to reveal us that there is room for a revision of the statements of the palinode, and that these cannot and perhaps ought not to be taken as the final word on these matters.

7.2. An open-ended discussion

Throughout this study we tried to explore the multiplicity of changes of perspective regarding ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν present in the sequence of erotic speeches of the *Phaedrus*. But in order to understand what these changes might be, we also had to consider what we have called the "implicit speech" – the complex set of notions and theses on these phenomena that is presupposed, engaged with, modified and discussed in the explicit speeches of the *Phaedrus*. The sequence of speeches, then, goes further back than one might have otherwise supposed: back to the cultural background from which the explicit speeches emerge, and with which they engage. But we also observed that this is a sequence that follows a specific pattern. It is not just the case of one speech following another. Rather, the subsequent speech picks up on the perspective present in the previous speech, and somehow revises and changes it in some of its aspects. By doing this, the subsequent speech reveals something about the previous one: it brings to the forefront some of the inexplicit assumptions of the previous speech, while in the process of changing and challenging them. That each of the speeches is itself partly made up of inexplicit assumptions is something we have already analysed at length in a previous chapter. We have also observed how these inexplicit assumptions, ὑποθέσεις, constitute moments of immobility on what might otherwise be a mobilised perspective, and how these may hide elements of decisive significance for the understanding of what is at stake. In other words, we observed that the sequence of speeches in the *Phaedrus*, both implicit

and explicit, relate to each other through a succession of mobilisations of ὑποθέσεις – thereby revealing new insights on the matters at hand.

The results yielded by this succession of mobilisations are not, however, permanent and definitive acquisitions. Rather, each of them may be subsequently submitted to a similar process of mobilisation. That is to say that what at a certain stage might appear to be something perfectly clear and established might be revealed by a subsequent mobilisation as being still a ὑπόθεσις. There is a tendency for our perspective to remain inert, and so one needs to keep on making the effort of mobilisation. That is to say that this whole process is potentially open-ended: at no moment one can be entirely sure that no further revision is possible – unless, of course, one has somehow covered every possible alternative. This, however, does not mean that this process is *de jure* endless, that one should consider the establishment of a fully cognitive perspective as something altogether impossible. Rather, the strive to keep on moving, to keep looking back and revising what is now taken as settled is an integral part of the process that might eventually lead to that end. It is to prevent one from settling on what is just an apparently cognitive perspective that one needs to carry on moving, as far as possible. It is a continuous process that moves towards an end; but one can only reach the end by continuing the effort of moving – otherwise, one might become stuck at what might appear to be the end, but is actually a mere stopping point[459].

It is in light of this that one should read the sudden interruption of the sequence of epideictic speeches right after the palinode. It does not necessarily mean that what the palinode has told us about ἔρως, μανία and φρονεῖν, about human nature and its vocation, about, in short, the whole of reality, is the final word. There is room for more speeches, for more discussion, for the search for and the finding out of new perspectives and new

[459] This process of mobilisation, which goes on in stages, with a succession of apparent stopping points, is comparable with the ascent of the released prisoner in the allegory of the cave (*Republic* VII, 514a1ff.). The different stages of the ascent from the bottom of the cave to the outside, and from there to looking properly at the sun are interrupted by different moments in which the released prisoner needs to be compelled to keep going. In other words, the prisoner does not go up and outside the cave in one continuous and eager movement, but faces obstacles at different moments and would probably stay put if he were not forced to carry on. These obstacles are not merely spatial in this sense. The μαρμαρυγή itself constitutes an obstacle, a reason for stopping the ascent. If one looks further and is unable to see clearly, one is tempted to think there is nothing that can actually be seen beyond this particular point. One will then believe to have reached the end. That this is not so is only revealed because the prisoner is forced to keep on looking until his eyes get used to the light. There is always the risk of mistaking any moment of interruption of the ascent – or the mobilisation of one's perspective – with having reached the end of what is possible. In other words, one is always at danger of taking for fully mobilised a point of view that is still plagued with ἀκίνητα.

ways of understanding these problems. The physically absent (but otherwise always present) Lysias is invited to carry on, to produce another speech, to improve on what he himself and Socrates have said so far. That there are no more speeches is due (ironically enough, when we remember his fondness for speeches) to Phaedrus' unwillingness to transmit the newly issued challenge to Lysias. It is Phaedrus who lets the sequence of speeches drop – and who suddenly changes the subject from the ostensive subject-matter of the speeches, ἔρως, to the nature and propriety of the activity of speech-making itself. The fact that the subject is changed, that there is a sudden turn in the direction of the dialogue does not by itself mean that the problems that had been at the centre of the discussion so far have been exhausted. On the contrary, they can be revisited, engaged with again and again. The "hypothetical structure", so to speak, which we have identified as one of the decisive structural traits of the dialogue, suggests precisely that. And the very absence of discussion from the rest of the *Phaedrus* does not suggest that there is nothing else to say on these matters, but rather that there is more: it is an invitation to look once again at what has been stated (and also at what remains implied), and to examine and question and explore the possibilities that lie therein, as far as possible.

Even if it was abandoned by the characters in the *Phaedrus*, the discussion can and may still carry on. More than that: it is an essential feature of the *corpus platonicum* that we the readers are invited to participate, to engage with it, to look at it with new eyes, so as to acquire a better understanding of what is the object of investigation. And so it is with the *Phaedrus*. In other words, the palinode might be the last speech in the *Phaedrus*, but we the readers are invited to come up with our own speeches, so to say – to pick up the challenge Phaedrus dropped. And so, as the explicit speeches of the *Phaedrus* presuppose an "implicit speech" – expressing the cultural background from which they emerge – they also expect, invite and welcome future and additional speeches, exploring, developing and revisiting those same themes and discussions. The problems that we found treated in the *Phaedrus* allow and ask for continued questioning, discussion and investigation. In other words, they invite the production of more speeches – for the sequence that began even before Lysias' speech to carry on beyond the end of the palinode, and even beyond the end of the *Phaedrus* itself.

What we are now about to finish is, in this sense, just another one of those possible speeches. It is not and does not claim to be the definitive word on any of the matters it has dwelt on. Rather, it places itself within the succession of speeches we have been trying

to describe, and welcomes and invites others, by whatever means and in whatever form, to read the *Phaedrus* and the *corpus platonicum* in general, to engage with it, to confront it and make use of it to understand reality and themselves. As far as we can tell, there is always room for yet another speech.

Let the next one begin.

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